THE PLAIN VIEW

A Quarterly Journal
concerned with human relations and with the quality of living

The Criminal and the Community — HONOR EARL

Marriage Guidance — EUSTACE CHESSER

Letter to a Conscript — LIONEL KOCHAN

Commentary, Book Reviews, and Correspondence

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EDITED BY GEOFFREY GODWIN

THE FORTY-EIGHT PAGES OF THE CURRENT NUMBER CONTAIN, WITH OTHER ARTICLES, BOOK REVIEWS, CORRESPONDENCE, ETC., THE FOLLOWING :

THE PRESENT QUESTION — **H. WESTMANN**

" . . . . Let us not forget that ideas apparently liberate themselves through man on the one hand and on the other hand man frees himself through ideas. Thus the abstraction society lifted on to a plane of authority in turn captures man through an impersonal totalitarian idea and this in due course depreciates the intrinsic value of the person. If we fail to realise this fact, man would become the victim of the abstraction of his own being. . . . ."

POETRY AND THE CHANGING SCENE — **E. W. MARTIN**

" . . . . This consciousness of rhythm and harmony, of the rise and fall of creative power, is not only a biological experience, though directly related to the sexual rhythm. It is an experience which comes only to the true poet who has become in some way connected and attuned to the outer universe. Like the mystic, the poet must contemplate, he must get into harmonious relationship with the fount of ever-present life which is the material on which his mind works . . . ."

THE POSITION IN ASIA — **DR. A. A. SANDOSHAM**

" . . . . The natural tendency in these Asian countries today is to jealously guard the freedom or the rights and privileges which they have gained with such great sacrifice. The attitude of Asian peoples towards Westerners today is one of suspicion and they are inclined to exclude the Europeans rather than co-operate with them. This, to my mind, is a misfortune to both sides, because there is much to be gained, by both East and West, from close association on an equal footing. The most urgent need of the hour is for Asia to realise that the West is not entirely the hostile and malignant force that propaganda has made it out to be, and for Asia to enter into a closer relationship with the West on a new, non-imperialistic basis of co-operation. . . ."

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THE PLAIN VIEW

Edited by H. J. BLACKHAM

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Ονδεν ικανον ω ολιγον το ικανον —EPICURUS

Nothing is sufficient for him to whom what is sufficient seems little

UBERTATES ET COPIAE VIRTUTIS —CICERO

the productiveness and the resources of human quality

THIS IS THAT WHICH WILL INDEED DIGNIFY AND EXALT KNOWLEDGE, IF CONTEMPLATION AND ACTION MAY BE MORE NEARLY AND STRAITLY CONJOINED AND UNITED TOGETHER THAN THEY HAVE BEEN; A CONJUNCTION LIKE UNTO THAT OF THE TWO HIGHEST PLANETS, SATURN THE PLANET OF REST AND CONTEMPLATION, AND JUPITER, THE PLANET OF CIVIL SOCIETY AND ACTION. —BACON

What the plain view perceives is neither obvious nor obscure

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COMMENTARY

HISTORIES MAKE MEN WISE. The study of history, because it is inexhaustible and all-important, co-extensive as the subject is with the concrete actuality of man, demands a philosophy of history, an interpretation, a clue. One can go to history happily and usefully for special purposes, but to elevate oneself to a view of universal history in order to discover the nature and destiny of man, without any preconceived ideas, is like holding up an ant to look at the landscape. We go to history as Christians, like Professor Toynbee or more recently Professor Butterfield, whose BBC course was described by the TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT as "the most outstanding pronouncement on the meaning of history made by a professional historian in England since Acton's *Inaugural*. Or, like Comte, or Spengler, or Marx, we find the clue in a general theory of development. But the histories which prove men's theories or comfort their souls are not the histories which make them wise. Is it then quite impossible to learn philosophy from history, instead of getting our histories from our philosophies? It is, if one is expecting a disinterested study of history to establish conclusively whether or not there is a purpose or a pattern in the sequence of things; or if one is hoping to discover a universal principle at the bottom of things, like the Will to Power; or even if one wants to cull general moral truths like, Power corrupts, or, Virtue pays. But if one is content to study the different ways in which men in different ages and places have tried to solve the permanent problems of the human situation, economic, political, and cultural, and if one tries to lay hold of the real unity without violating the real diversity, then, there is wisdom to be learned which one can get from no other source. The fruit of such study is not a crop of maxims, nor a formula for what is going on in the world, nor a plan for the definitive solution of the permanent problems; its result is incommunicable, not a philosophy but philosophical maturity, not an olympian view of all time and all existence but a heightened awareness of the present time, a recognition of its essence, its pattern.

"All history is contemporary history." There are several senses in which this saying is true: a geological time scale makes it relatively true; it is inescapably true that one looks at the past through the spectacles of the present; it is true in a third sense if one uses the past to interpret the present, not merely to show how it came about but also to refine the sense of its distinctiveness and of its possibilities. A humanist philosophy of history, whatever other uses it has for history, will not fail to make use of it in this way.

There is a parallel in the history of philosophy. The most general problems are permanent just because they are real; there can be no conclusion to the discussion, although every solution claims to be final. There is no reason in this for cynicism or despair. Any philosophical view, however well-grounded and justified, is bound to be in some part abitrary, conventional, local, perspective; other men, especially in other ages, are bound to make different approaches even to positions which are essentially the same. The real problems are permanent and will demand new solutions so long as life goes on; only the pseudo-problems are disposed of—and they crop up again and again. The permanent problems and their temporary solutions are the actual means of thinking and living, and definitive solutions would be the end of thought and of life. But the history of these problems and of their solutions is an indispensable means of refining our perception of the problems and of the alternatives. So it is with the general history of mankind: what we learn from it is to find the universal in the present, and not to look for it elsewhere.

REVOLUTIONS. In an incisive passage in his book *The Clue to History* Professor Macmurray argues that the "Cogito, ergo sum" of Descartes, which stands at the head of modern philosophical tradition, is in fact equivalent to the assertion, "I will not be a worker." There would be no parody in applying the point to Montaigne and saying that the "Que scais-je?" means at bottom, "I am no grammarian or logician, I am a gentleman." The scorn not merely of pedantry but also of specialism, the gentleman's dispensation from servile labour even in the intellectual field, put something of a blight on the professions, and for long the butt of polite ridicule was not the refuse of their callings but their exemplars and types. The professions have all begun as a pariah caste. A liberal profession, that is to say, one fit for a gentleman, is a contradiction in terms that marks the fight for recognition and the eventual triumph. Although polite society at the highest level in the best ages made much of literature, and even of science, it was an autonomous world existing for its own sake and ruled by its own judgements, exclusive, superior, always ready to kill with ridicule deviations from the norms it set.

Since those days the world has been turned upside-down. In an age of reconstruction first things come first: technicians, administrators, doctors, and teachers are first amongst the first; the gentleman, although become rare enough to have specimen value, is officially classified under quasi-entomological names and hunted for undermanned industries. Even the remembered world of Henry James looks very remote.

Yet to-day there is some anxiety to correct the evils of specialism, a sensible concern that will take practical measures likely to be far more efficacious than the censure of polite society which created (especially outside of its own circle) more contemptible narrowness and deformity of spirit than it ever cured.

The broad culture of the ruling class maintained by polite society was something very different from university scholarship; and to seek to remedy the disappearance of polite society and to compensate the increasing need for specialization and professional training in every position of authority by giving the specialist in training in the institutions of higher learning a background or a tincture or a parallel course of 'cultural 'studies is the least imaginative and least promising approach to the problem. The problem for profoundly original minds (as Nietzsche found) is a thing apart. The problem for modern society (and here the analysis of Ortega y Gasset in *The Modern Theme* is most relevant and helpful) is to achieve a social synthesis by the wide and fruitful application of the sciences and arts and all the specialisms, the fulfilment of life by the work of the specialists, rather than a theoretical synthesis in which all shall be more or less versed. The cure for the evils of specialism, as for the evils of the machine, is to secure the human fruits of these developments; and to concentrate hopes on the addition of liberal studies to technical training is a distraction from the real matter. A social synthesis by the spontaneous and the planned and co-ordinated application of all the specialisms to human good, generating the conditions and the means of a new social experience and multiplying the paths of social intercourse, is the ground of a new culture. The only hope is to go resolutely on and to form steadfast purposes out of the difficult possibilities offered by actual trends. In this enterprise one should not be too impressed by the models of the past.

HAVE A GO. *Painting for Pleasure, Philosophy for Pleasure*: are these authors merely beguiling the public ear with alliterative allurement, or do they really mean it, and what do they mean? What spell turns arduous pursuits into pleasant pastimes? One has seen pleasant pastimes turned into arduous pursuits, and the inference seems to be that the difference is made by the addition or subtraction of hopes and fears. Make the subtraction, and you have: philosophy without exams. (although Plato said the unexamined life is no life for man), painting without having to (although Johnson said no one but a fool ever wrote except for money), going along to the celebrated "unearthly ballet of bloodless categories" without turning in an essay about it afterwards,

sitting all morning in the sun without ever really finding the exact bit one wants to paint. Then there are the adventitious pleasures. If one is opulent one was or will be but is not able to rent a studio—and even a gallery. Or one can collect a library. And once one is known to be an amateur, one has a status and is set up for life. There is an extraordinary glamour about disinterested devotion; it excites the interest of an illicit passion, and very little evidence suffices to build a legend.

The little girl writing an essay on the pleasures of childhood confessed they were many but opined they were not to be compared with the pleasures of adultery. Like her we may hold that the pleasures of the amateur are not the real thing. And like her we should be wrong—and right. For they are different in kind, like the pleasures of children and adults. What happens if pursuing painting or philosophy for pleasure one goes over the line and becomes seriously engaged: does the pleasure cease? What happens if one is engaging in a delicate amour and falls in love? There is a change of texture, a total transformation; a floating tissue of pleasure dissolves into an ingredient in a substance, a substantive becomes an adjective. Indulging in painting or philosophy for pleasure, as in love, there is a risk. To get and sustain the pleasure without becoming seriously engaged is an art in itself, for the greater the pleasure obtained the greater the risk of falling into the other orbit where all is different. Hence the great need of manuals to initiate the unsophisticated amateur, not into painting or philosophy but into the art of pleasure, the art of *flirting*.

THE CRIMINAL AND THE COMMUNITY

THERE can be few fields of thought which arouse such an irrational response as the problem of crime and punishment. It is a matter about which most people feel so emotionally that they are unable to bring themselves to accept evidence or even to seek reliable information. That this reaction is general in Great Britain even among highly educated individuals was amply proved by the debates in both Houses on the suspension of capital punishment. On June 1st, 1948, Lord Pethick-Lawrence said in the House of Lords: "As I see this question, the vote that your Lordships have to cast tomorrow is a division between sentiment and evidence. Sentiment is on the side of those who want to retain the death penalty; evidence and scientific knowledge are on the side of those who would repeal it. To-morrow it will be for your Lordships to give your verdict. If you give it in favour of no change, and against the clause, you will be giving it against the weight of evidence. You will be giving it on sentimental grounds and because of your preconceived ignorant opinions." That their Lordships voted against the clause was due in the main to one very strongly held opinion—that hanging acts as a deterrent. However, not only does all the evidence from other countries suggest that this is an erroneous conception, but every one who has had any experience of the criminal mentality would agree that one of the respects in which the mind of the criminally disposed person differs most from the normal is in its total inability to look ahead realistically. This was borne out when the question of flogging was being considered by a specially appointed committee. There was not a shred of evidence to suggest that flogging had ever acted as a deterrent. The coldly calculating type of criminal who *can* look ahead is probably rarely caught.

An emotional attitude towards crime and the criminal is quite natural. One does not need to be a psycho-analyst to understand the reason, for to admit the evidence is to acknowledge that most delinquents are not "wicked people" who must be punished, but individuals who have been so unfortunate in their parentage or their conditioning that they are in need of re-education. Once you have accepted this you are deprived of many comforts and even pleasures. You can no longer get rid of your own sense of guilt by the mechanism of projection; you can no longer console yourself by the contrast between the convicted prisoner and yourself ("He has been found guilty of a penal offence, so he is 'bad'; I have never been found guilty, so I am 'good' "). Worst of all, you must deprive yourself of one of the most pleasurable of all human

emotions, that of righteous wrath. To demand the total elimination of righteous wrath in our present state of mental evolution is perhaps asking too much of people.

It might therefore be better to suggest that where crime is concerned the wrath should be directed towards the parents of the wrongdoer rather than towards the delinquent himself. Admittedly this attitude would hardly be more rational, since if one set of parents are to be held to blame for their offspring's wrong doing then it is presumably because *their* parents failed in their duty towards them, ad infinitum. However, this anger switch would at least enable penal reformers to get ahead with plans for re-education and rehabilitation unencumbered by the popular cry for retribution. It might even have a salutary effect. For once all parents had discovered that they themselves would be held to blame for any delinquent act committed by their children, in self-defence, they might be driven to make an effort to understand what is the right and wrong way to bring up a child. Possibly I am prejudiced in this matter because for eight years I was a prison visitor to Holloway Gaol, and during this time there were frequent occasions when rightly or wrongly I felt distinctly wrathful towards parents.

Official visitors, although unpaid, are appointed by the Home Office. They visit the half-dozen or more prisoners allotted to them about once a week. Their terms of reference are vague, but according to the small book issued to them they are supposed "To endeavour to alter the prisoner's outlook on life, lessen his selfishness, and rouse in him some idea of his duty towards his fellow men." I never discovered on what basis prison visitors are appointed or what qualifications are deemed necessary. But I found it very strange that no special training was ever given to these voluntary workers, for they are put in a position where skilled handling might make a great deal of difference to the men and women they encounter.

The relationship between the official visitor and the prisoner is an unusual one. Cut off from their relations and friends and deprived of almost all normal human contacts, prisoners are approached while they are undergoing what for most of them is the most lonely, desolate experience of their lives. The interviews usually take place in the prisoner's cell during the long hours of solitary confinement which still form part of a prison sentence. As a result of this situation a degree of intimacy is often established in a few weeks which in normal circumstances would only develop after years, if at all. It is therefore fair to say that the official prison visitor is the only person outside the criminal community

who has an opportunity of getting to know a considerable number of delinquents on intimate terms.

The experience gained through these intimate contacts convinced me that our present system of dealing with offenders is unrealistic and ineffective in its efforts to deter or to reform. The authorities might find it easier to devise more rational methods of dealing with the problem of delinquency once they recognised the fact that most offenders fall into two distinct groups. The first group is composed of people who can be, and usually are, perfectly normal, well-adjusted individuals who have adopted crime as a career for the good reason that they are reared among the "wide people" or at least among people who see nothing wrong in robbing, defrauding or cheating the "mugs" by any method possible. Prison is no disgrace to this type of person, it is accepted as one of the hazards of the profession they have chosen. After several convictions it may even become a "home from home" to them. An old lady whom I visited off and on for many years always asked me to leave her cell door open when she had recently returned to Holloway so that she could greet her friends as they passed by. She had lived in an East End slum all her life and her sentences were invariably for thieving and drunkenness. She had received her first sentence over 50 years ago when I feel sure she had stolen from sheer economic necessity. Shortly before her husband died she told me that she had gone up and down the Commercial Road "fiddling" him dainties so that she could give him a treat in hospital. She was filled with pride that she had been such a good wife to him.

The most effective method of dealing with this type of law breaker is to remove him at the earliest opportunity from his criminal collaborators. This group would diminish rapidly if the pursuit of crime could be made less profitable through increasing the risk of detection and in every other way that can be devised. It is known that a delinquent of this type can be entirely re-orientated through a change of environment. A friend of mine who is now a successful valued member of society spent his early years with a criminal gang in Soho. He says of himself that he was a very conventional lad who tried hard to do what was expected of him. He was required to be a thief and except for interludes spent in Approved Schools, Borstal, and finally prisons, thieving was his main occupation. During one of his prison sentences he decided to write his autobiography. This book proved so successful that on his release he found himself in a very different social group, one where he did not have to break the law in order to be well regarded. He adapted himself to his new surroundings, made a happy mar-

riage and has never looked back. In support of the modern theories of mental health it should be noted that this man was brought up with every possible social disadvantage, with one vital exception. His mother, whatever her moral principles may have been in other respects, did give him a great deal of affection.

People falling in the second group present a very different problem. They are mostly individuals whose family and former associates regard crime with abhorrence. They are often people whose moral standards (apart from their one failing) are irreproachable. Many of them view their own crimes with bewilderment. They feel themselves to be "good" people. They cannot understand why they have committed the offence with which they are charged. In every case of this kind of which I had experience, the explanation of their behaviour could be found through examination of their childhood. It is significant that among the many hundreds of people I visited in prison and Borstal, almost none were loved as children. Early deprivation of affection and understanding tends to embitter to an extent which is liable to produce an anti-social type, but even when they are not embittered, it is difficult for the people deprived in this way to become socially adapted human beings, since they have not been able to abandon the "pleasure principle" through the normal process of wishing to retain their mother's love. (See Dr. Kate Friedlander's *The Psycho-Analytical Approach to Juvenile Delinquency*.) Also they endeavour to compensate themselves for having been deprived of what they sub-consciously feel to have been their natural right by every possible means, however likely these are to involve them in trouble. Their craving for luxuries and for extravagances of all kinds should be ascribed not only to the operation of the "pleasure principle," but also to a deep conviction that in some way they are "owed" these things. The conscious and unconscious feeling of insecurity and inferiority which this lack of early love has induced, may make it so imperative for these people to obtain affection and admiration that they will stop at nothing to get it. For this group of offenders, prison is usually a cruel punishment, but punishment does not cure or even deter these types. Aichhorn, through the successful experiment he made with boys in his reformatory, and many others also, have proved that they can be re-claimed, but only through long, patient re-education by people who really understand the mechanics of the mind. Aichhorn tells the story of his efforts to re-educate the young delinquents in a Viennese reformatory in his book *Wayward Youth*. He was put in charge of boys who were so unmanageable that no other institution was willing to take them. He insisted that no punishment or discipline should

be administered until they had lost their feeling of unhappiness and frustration, and had made a successful "transference" through the members of his staff, whom he specially trained for this difficult task. It must have needed an almost superhuman patience on the part of these people to go on showing friendliness and affection however badly these hooligans behaved. But the experiment entirely justified itself, and finally most of these boys were re-educated to become normal useful citizens.

For many years I had an opportunity of closely observing a typical delinquent of this kind. She was an educated woman of nearly sixty, who said that she had been a university lecturer. She had already served several sentences when I first visited her. At first she was rather hostile, and spent the time during my visits complaining of the injustice of her sentence. Later, she became more friendly, but I had had no opportunity of really getting to know her by the time her sentence expired. I saw her once after her release, and then heard no more until I got an S.O.S. from Holloway, where she was on remand, imploring me to help her by briefing a woman barrister to defend her, who she assured me had succeeded in getting even old offenders put on probation. I did this, but, needless to say, she was sent back to Holloway with a long sentence. This time her whole attitude to me was different. After a short while, she began to tell me about her childhood. I believe that substantially the story she told me was true. Her mother died when she was born, and her father had always had a grudge against her for being the cause of his wife's death. He was extremely harsh and unloving, and frightened her with stories of hell-fire and everlasting damnation. She alleged that he was a clergyman, which may not have been true, but she was certainly reared in close contact with the Church of England, and had retained a deep interest in religious matters. The only people who ever showed her kindness were maids in her own house: this is of interest, because even in her worst phases she was always kind and generous to the servants and charwomen she encountered. It seems that she was a very well-behaved child, and showed no delinquent signs in her childhood or girlhood. She made a happy marriage, but unfortunately after a few years her husband died. From this time on, she indulged in the series of frauds which eventually led to her being charged with "obtaining money by false pretences." During our many conversations, I tried to explain to her that this behaviour was due to an unconscious desire on her part to compensate herself for having been cheated of her right share of love. After some months it became obvious that a "transference" had taken place, and that she was now identifying

me with her mother. This was not through any design on my part, but it must have helped her, as after this her nature changed quite considerably. She became much more friendly to other prisoners, she was not nearly so frightened of the air raids that were then taking place. She found that for the first time in her life, she was able to stop biting her nails. Before her sentence expired, she asked me to promise that I would look after her financially for one month after her release. Although I felt this was a great risk which I was most unwilling to take, I did not like to refuse. Actually, my fears turned out to be groundless, for after a few days' liberty, she declared that rather than be a burden to me, she would take any post she could get; and to my great surprise she became a cook-housekeeper somewhere out of London. Later, having obtained a good reference, she took a secretarial job. During nearly four years, she showed almost no delinquent tendencies, although she was still abnormally dependent on me. Towards the end of this time, she was befriended by a clergyman to whom she was so devoted that her interest in me became more normal, and I was full of hope that she would continue to lead the life of an ordinary socially adapted citizen. Unfortunately I was wrong, for when I returned to England after two months' absence abroad, it was to find that she had got into debt to the extent of several hundred pounds, and my refusal to settle these debts for her resulted in a violent hostility which closed our association. Although the end of this story seems unencouraging, it is important to take into consideration two factors in the case; firstly, that she was an elderly woman, and, secondly, that she needed much more skilful help than I could give her. I have no doubt at all that, had she been younger, and had it been possible to give her psychological treatment, a permanent cure could have been effected. It is significant that the money she obtains is almost always spent on others in an effort to impress them and to gain their interest and affection.

As I have made use of psycho-analytical terms in this case history perhaps I should explain that before I became a prison visitor I knew almost nothing of the theories on which psychotherapists now base their treatment. But the impossibility of understanding the inconsistencies of behaviour which I encountered in prison drove me to study and finally accept many of these theories.

I found many different varieties of the neurotic type of prisoner at Holloway. There were the ones who suffered from guilty feelings which had compelled them to commit some offence just in order to be punished. These people invariably select a time and place for their misdeeds which will render detection inevitable.

Then there were the ones whose persecution mania or neurotic anxiety had driven them to criminal actions, the motives for which far from being offensive were entirely defensive. In addition to these types there are always a number of borderline mental defectives in prison. It is one of the very grave defects of our penal system that there are no separate establishments for these people. However little they are capable of understanding their offence, unless they are certifiable, they are liable to be sent to prison. The abnormality of prison life makes it a particularly unsuitable place for the mentally unstable individual. It is mainly because these people have not succeeded in becoming socially adapted that they commit crimes. The absence of all ordinary social contacts will send them back into the world even less able to conform to normal standards than before. The only prisoners whose lives are remotely normal are women whose babies are born in prison, and then only if they are serving short sentences. Otherwise they will suffer from a most inhuman regulation which takes their children from them at nine months, or sometimes even earlier. The reason given for this is that prison is only suitable for infants and that there are no proper facilities for accommodating even quite small children. This is no excuse, as obviously provision should be made for these mothers in a separate establishment; and if this is not possible at present then they should be released. No mother can now be compelled to have her child born in prison, but the child is likely to be handicapped even more seriously if it is taken away from her at this critical age.

It has been estimated that about half the adults charged by the courts committed their first offence before the age of 16. A great deal more research is needed before we can be certain what factors in a child's life cause it to become a "delinquency prone" individual. Much is already known. It is evident that broken homes, unloving or over-indulgent parents, harsh or brutal treatment are predisposing factors, and that poverty, slums, and overcrowded homes are contributory causes. Emotional or physical shocks, even jealousy, can be precipitating factors. The part played by the over or under functioning of glands and other possible physical causes needs to be thoroughly explored. Although great efforts have been made lately to cope with the problem of the young offender, the present position is still far from satisfactory. For instance, it is hard to believe that the best thing to do with erring youth is to herd large numbers together in approved schools or Borstals, however efficiently run these establishments may be. It is obvious that in these conditions the boy or girl who has done, or can successfully pretend to have done, the biggest and best crime,

will be the most highly regarded. The comparatively high proportion of successes achieved in some of these institutions is a testimony to the devoted work of those in charge. But it does not alter the fact that where a child has to be taken from its home, in most cases it would have a much better chance if it could be sent into a non-delinquent community.

A time may come when all forms of prison will be abolished. At present, although concentration on prevention and cure should be the first consideration, it is probably necessary that some form of detention should continue. But prison life must be radically changed if it is not to do far more harm than good. The classification of prisoners should be on more scientific lines. At present although there are certain categories, such as first offenders and star prisoners, who are separated, there are vastly different types of law breakers imprisoned together, and subjected with few variations to the same routine. This is both cruel and unpractical. An intelligent programme of training and re-education suited to each individual would probably be no more attractive to the law breaker than the present system, under which once he has finished his short day's work he need make no effort, either mental or physical. But it would give him a much better chance of recovery when he leaves prison. Because of the separation and the disgrace involved, prison to those outside will always remain a deterrent. To those within its walls the present system is hardly acting as an effective deterrent, since many offenders come back over and over again. For the seriously neurotic type of delinquent, prison is seldom the best solution. They have a much better chance of recovery if they are put on probation and given psycho-therapeutic treatment of the kind that is provided by the Institute for the Scientific Treatment of Delinquency.

Another problem which has to be faced is how to rehabilitate the prisoner on discharge. Until recently, apart from those serving penal sentences or Borstal inmates, the State offered no assistance to prisoners on release. Now the Home Office has established a central after-care association in which are merged the main bodies dealing with the welfare of the ex-prisoner. Most prisoners require a great deal of help if they are to be put on their feet again. They have almost always lost their job. They may have entirely lost touch with their family and friends, often they are homeless and destitute. The present regulations allow prisoners only one visit and at most two letters a month, so that during their sentence they are cut off from almost all their normal outside contacts, whether good or bad. This enormously increases their post-prison trouble. If life has been difficult for them before they were

sent to prison, it is going to be far harder for them after they leave. Short-sighted critics maintain that it is unfair to the people who "go straight" for time and money to be spent on a gaol bird. They seem incapable of understanding that in order to protect society it is essential to do so, for without help a prisoner is almost certain to get into trouble again. During my years as a visitor, the help given by the Holloway Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society was often hopelessly inadequate. This is important work which may affect a man's whole future. It should be undertaken by the State in a more realistic spirit than has been shown hitherto. At present many people return to prison to be kept at the tax-payers' expense who might have become useful citizens if more money and time had been spent on them when they were first discharged.

Almost all scientific methods for the prevention and cure of delinquency cost money, but they should be regarded as an investment. The most vital of all preventative measures need not be costly. It consists in educating all those in contact with the young to understand what methods of upbringing are likely to produce a healthy mind, and to recognize the early signs of mental ill-health as quickly as they do physical ill-health. Once parents could be persuaded of this simple truth, that a normal child given love and understanding allied with patient, kind discipline seldom fails to become a well adjusted, socially minded human being, and of the complementary truth that early deprivation of love, cruelty, or over harsh discipline is liable to produce a neurotic "delinquency prone" individual, then we should quickly empty both our mental hospitals and our prisons.

HONOR EARL

MARRIAGE GUIDANCE

The Ethical Union proposes in the autumn to offer a short course on some aspects of marriage, with a view to further discussion and work in this field—preparation for marriage, marriage guidance, and a humanist valuation of marriage.

ALL I can claim in discussing marriage is a certain amount of human wisdom, gained through long experience and observation and through receiving the confidences of many persons in all walks of life. I have, in the course of my work, been very much struck by the amount of married unhappiness which exists all around us. I have been even more struck by the fact that it could all so easily have been avoided. Most human misery is unnecessary misery.

The Marriage Guidance councils and clinics are doing very fine work. Nothing that I say should be interpreted as minimising in any way their magnificent contribution to our social life. At the present time, and for a very long time in the future, they are an essential part of our voluntary and communal social services. The fact remains, however, that the work they do belongs to the order of cure, rather than that of prevention. That is to say, they deal with the evil results of general neglect, when the true basic need is for such education as will prevent those evil results from ever arising. The Marriage Guidance clinics exist to serve those who have already, in one degree or another, got their lives into difficulties. The material they handle is already in some degree spoiled material; with only the possible exception of those young people who go for advice before entering upon marriage. Even in this latter case, however, it is very late in the day: for what we make of marriage is not determined by marriage itself, but by what we ourselves are, in our total personalities.

There are, of course, a certain number of cases where true practical difficulties have arisen in marriage, perhaps difficulties of a sexual order. A husband's or wife's sexual technique may be inadequate. There may be a lack of contraception knowledge and a consequent dread of pregnancy. In such cases as these, much repair work may be done; and these probably represent the biggest class of persons going for treatment. If, however, we confine our interest only to these particular instances, then we are in danger of treating the symptoms, not the disease. Failure in marriage represents failure in human relationships—marriage being perhaps the highest form of human relationship which can exist—and failures

in human relationships usually arise from inadequate training for life.

I must, indeed, confess myself somewhat disturbed in mind by the over-emphasis thrown upon marriage guidance, to the utter neglect of "education for marriage." That does not imply any lack of appreciation of all that marriage guidance workers are doing. There seems, however, to be a tendency in human nature always to go to extremes. From the extreme of refusing to permit the mention of sexuality, let alone sexual organs and sexual activity, we have gone in recent years to the other extreme, of over-emphasizing the part played in life by our sexuality. Sex is a part of life only; a most important part, but still not by any means the whole.

We must begin, now that the idea of marriage guidance has been firmly planted in the public mind, to go rather further than that. We must persuade the public that "education for marriage" is more important even than marriage guidance; that people should no longer be permitted to enter into marriage as if it were a blissful state which falls upon them from the skies; but that it should become more generally appreciated that marriage can only be created from within, by the individuals who enter into it. The reason why marriage guidance is so greatly needed at the present time, to do its urgent repair-work, is in the main because of faulty education in the past. As usual, the sins of the parents are visited upon the children. Unless we are prepared to allow that vicious circle to continue, we must try to break it, by extending the idea of marriage guidance into the concept of marriage preparation.

Let us first be quite sure of our terms. What is marriage? Surely it is a partnership of two people, each of whom as an individual may be the focus of a certain small circle. When they are joined, their circles overlap, and perhaps each becomes more completely filled than formerly. From that union, it should be the aim to create the soil in which the total personality of each partner will be most fully expressed. In reaching this total expression of each individuality, it must be understood that the husband is to receive something from the wife, and the wife something from him; in each case, those complementary qualities which differentiate the sexes. Each must give, in order to receive.

But are they ready to give? Here we have two individuals, each with a different home background. The man has been brought up to regard his father as the "big chief" of the home, and now perhaps sees the chance to "throw his own weight" about more than he could have done at home. The girl, with her complementary feelings, with perhaps some lingering resentment of the

masculine domination of her own father, arrives trailing her own particular legacy of home background and experience. These two people have to settle down and become adjusted to living in an equal partnership. They must 'make allowances' for one another, and 'compromise' with their own individual wishes and desires. It is small wonder if such adjustment is difficult in the best of circumstances; how much more, when neither has received the least help or preparation for the radical adjustment which has to be made!

Fortunately, in this period of inevitable difficulty, Nature, as usual, comes to our aid in the most wonderful way. It is perhaps during the first two years of marriage that sex is at its most potent, as a factor in married happiness. In marriage as a whole, I do not, I repeat, regard sex as an over-riding factor for success or failure—there are so many other aspects of marriage to be considered. In those first two years, however, it is exceedingly strong. For it is at this time that the sexual bond helps to overcome, or counter-balance, the difficulties of adjustment to common life; if at this time sexuality 'goes wrong,' then the results are likely to be correspondingly unfortunate.

When one speaks of the complete expression of the self within marriage, that must of course include the expression of the physical self. I personally feel that as between members of the opposite sexes, a relationship can only approach perfection when the individuals are in communion of both body and mind—and perhaps soul. That is not to say that there cannot be platonic friendship. There most certainly can be. But its character is unlikely to be so completely rich and full as a total relationship.

Marriage guidance in its present limited sense cannot help those persons whose marriages have failed—or are doomed to failure before they even contract them—because of a lack of emotional maturity, and the presence of excessive inhibition. There must be a complete freedom within the self, before it is possible to participate in sexual union with complete abandon. There must be self-understanding as complete as possible to a human being, before there can be real understanding and tolerance for the partner. Marriage guidance starts from the cradle. And, of all the knowledge which it should give, the most important, to my mind, is an understanding of the difference between the sexes.

Only when a husband understands what his wife expects, and what she is able to give, in love and marriage; and when the wife understands what her husband expects, and what he is able to give, in love and marriage; only then is there hope for a really complete understanding and an enduring bond.

Let us, then, examine, what are the chief differences between the sexes, as apart from their obvious physical differences.

The first, and I think the most important, lies in the difference between their degree of emotional maturity. In my opinion, women are on the whole more mature, in the emotional sense, than men can ever be. It is not difficult to see why this is, or why, if we can attribute a conscious design, Nature has made it so. Women bear children. It is essential to the proper development of the child-mind that the child shall have a stable home, and the love and care of a mother, at least during the first few years. If circumstances deprive it of the natural mother and home, then in the very nature of things, a substitute must be provided. Women, therefore, must be *stable* in character; and, on the whole they are. The excessively-irresponsible male often complains of this very fact, when he ought, remembering his own mother and thinking of his own chance of children, to offer thanks to God for it! Women must also be, in the emotional sense, at any rate, more completely rounded: more capable of a completed circle of emotional experience.

This brings us to our second, and perhaps most salient point, arising naturally from the first. Woman has the maternal instinct. That may seem obvious, but it has far wider implications than are generally realised. For one thing, man has no exact counterpart to this instinct. After the birth of a child, he becomes interested in it, and gradually a sense of paternity develops. This can be of very great importance in the development of his character as a human being. However strong and beneficial this feeling, however, it will never be quite the same thing as the maternal instinct, present in women whether in physical fact they become mothers or whether they do not. A woman will *instinctively* give her life for a child, while a man may do so, but will do so *consciously*, after taking thought.

Indeed, in marriage, the relationship of the wife to the husband is that of mate plus mother. She is not only the loving mistress, but also the loving mother, upon whom he has been dependent since earliest years. On the other hand, the husband is to the wife mate plus child—and remains in that psychological sense partly her child, even when their own real children have been added to the family circle.

Woman has, therefore, contrary to the general impression, not only a greater *stability*, but also a greater *independence* in the emotional sense. She is mother both to her children and to her husband, and has no-one to turn to for warmer comfort. The husband turns to the wife for the soft comforting, the cradling, which

his battered spirit may need. She turns to him for protection, but not for emotional support.

Now, since this is the case, woman has a greater degree of emotional maturity. As a result of bearing children, and giving of herself, physically, mentally and spiritually, she can reach a total fulfilment which cannot be attained by any man. The man, by contrast, is left, as it were, hanging on for emotional support to the idea of "the mother." This must be thoroughly understood by both sexes if there is not to be continual disharmony in the marriage relationship. Only thus can the woman understand, and make allowances for, the egocentricity, the childishness, indeed even the megalomaniac behaviour of the man. If she wants peace and harmony, if she wishes to be completely loved, then she must regard his more foolish behaviour as the behaviour of a child, and treat it accordingly. If she tries to insist that he should make an effort, which is not in his nature to make, to behave otherwise, she comes up against natural facts, and the result will only be trouble.

Now, it is my experience that the less educated women, those, that is to say, whose natural instincts have not been brought into conflict with over-cerebration, understand these things better than their well-educated sisters in more exalted walks of life. Their attitude to their husbands is psychologically correct, to a degree which the women who should have the best knowledge of theory seem never to be able to attain.

They acknowledge the man as head of the household, as centre almost of the universe, thus showing him the same indulgence previously shown by his mother. They accept and overlook his peccadilloes. Effectively, they still contrive to run their homes in the way they think they should be run; and often the children, if not the neighbours, know who it is who *really* is the "boss"—as apart from the one who is quite convinced he is.

It is, however, a different case when further education has been gained. It may have some advantage, in that the man may come to realise the absurdity of his own behaviour, and therefore make some attempt to modify it. That may help along the marriage relationship. The thinking woman, however, acting no longer by instinct but upon rationalization, now looks at the man and says to herself: "Why the hell should I put up with this, just because he is a man?" Conscious of her intellectual equality and her all-round capacity, she simply does not see why she should make more allowances for him than may be made for her. If she persists in carrying these "principles" into action in her married life, then as a wife she is doomed.

The women of this, and other Anglo-Saxon countries, have a

strong streak of anti-masculine protest in their nature. They have tended, on the whole, to go after the shadow of power rather than its substance. There is a tendency for some women to wish to be "equal," not in the reasonable sense of having equal opportunity for their highest development as individual *women*, but in the sense of demanding a "right" to equal development as if they were men.

Now, I suppose I am open to a charge of lack of objectivity upon this subject, being myself a man; and some degree of unconscious lack of objectivity there may be. But I prefer to believe that the sexes are not identical, but complementary. Nature did not, after all, bring about the existence of two sexes in, as it were, a light-hearted moment. There is a definite purpose in the existence of the separate sexes: the continuation of species, and the variation of species. This implies a wholeness only where there is union between the complementary sexes. Man has some qualities, such as physical strength, which woman cannot as a rule share. Woman has some qualities, notably her power for pure and unselfish devotion, which is shared by few men. How much better to accept these facts, as facts, and to build upon them!

This brings us to the third main point of difference between the sexes: their attitude towards sex itself. I believe it is a fact that, on the whole, man is promiscuous, not necessarily in practice, but in imagination, or by instinct. The reason is not hard to find, being Nature's resolute determination that the female shall be rendered fecund at all costs.

Most men, and especially those of forty onwards, do tend, however happily married they are, to look at other women besides their wives, and to get a certain degree of pleasure or excitement out of the looking. They may have no intention whatever—in fact, they usually have not—of being physically unfaithful. But they are pushed by their masculine nature into promiscuity of thought. The woman, on the other hand, provided that she is reasonably content in her marriage, is not so likely to look elsewhere. Although, of course, there are always exceptions, on the whole the happily married woman does not even notice other men than her husband, in the sexual sense.

Here again, no good whatsoever will be done by any attempt on the part of any one wife to arrest the course of nature in her own husband. She cannot make, and would indeed hardly wish him to be, less than a man. If she wants him a man, she must accept the small disadvantages implied in his manhood, and tolerate his little frailties. Women find a man's natural promiscuity difficult to understand. They feel that their husband's glances of admiration and even desire, towards other women, are evidence of lack of love

to themselves. It would be much more true to say that the lack of knowledge is on their own side, not to understand the stuff men are made of.

On the other hand, however, there is an implied obligation. In marriage, as in all life, nothing for nothing is the rule. If the woman is to understand and to make allowances for the man's human nature in the sense of sexual frailty, he on his side must understand the significance of sex and of married faithfulness to her. When the husband realizes that his complete faithfulness in not only deed, but even thought, is to his wife the symbol of his love for her, then he is under an obligation not to disillusion her. He must spare her feelings, even at some cost to himself.

Nor is this a mere counsel of perfection. A certain price must be paid by us all, in return for those privileges and protections received by us from the fact of communal living. That is generally recognized, in regard to the expression of other natural reactions. We cannot take what we covet, nor, even in stress of great anger, take others' lives. Why, then, should sexual expression alone be claimed by some people as the field of complete liberty? It is not enough to say that we should like to have, or to do, something or other. A man might have a taste for expensive food. That is not to say that he can, or indeed is likely, to dissipate the whole of his week's wage to obtain it, leaving the rest of the family unprovided for We must impose upon ourselves certain restraints of our appetites, if communal life is to have any solid basis at all. Of these, sex is one, and should be recognised as such.

There has been a lot of foolish and dangerous nonsense talked, as if restraint of our sexual urge could be a harmful thing in itself. No conscious restraint can harm us; it is only refusal to face the fact that such an urge exists, which can bring about evil results, when the instinct which has been repressed—that is to say, not acknowledged—finds some way to force itself into notice. In sex, and in life generally, the way to find peace in ourselves, and to keep the peace for others, is to understand the nature of our own basic urges. When we have recognized the existence of both the devil and the god within us, then we may give them expression within those limits imposed by the fact that we live in an inter-dependent society.

To touch upon the sex instinct brings us to yet another, more intimate, difference between the sexes, which must be fully understood by the partners to a marriage. Not only is there a psychological difference between the sexes, as we have seen; there is also a big difference in their physiological reactions when it comes to the sex act itself.

In this matter, too, though I have called it a physiological one, we are still very close to psychological, or emotional, matters. It is a fact that, after orgasm, the male experiences a steep drop in his reactions; he is, to put it bluntly, usually tired, and anxious to drop off to sleep. The wife, on the other hand, after the completion of the embrace, is likely then to experience the warmest and deepest sensations of affection. She desires to be held close, not actively, but passively; to be consciously loved in the emotional sense. The wise husband, understanding these reactions, will provide for them. It will cost him little to have to remember; the small effort will be well repaid in an affectionate and contented wife.

While we are upon this matter, I should like to point out the essential difference in the total attitude of the two sexes towards the sexual act. It seems to me that, every time the average woman is made love to, her sexual instinct becomes more and more tied up with the idea of maternity. This may not be a conscious reaction, but I am convinced that it is at least an unconscious one. Every sexual act tends to confirm within the woman the maternal feeling. On the other hand, the sexual act does not so deeply stir the average man. Where he loves his wife, it will do so; but he is on the whole perfectly capable of enjoying sexual experience for its own sake, as the satisfaction of an appetite, without it having those really very deep emotional connections which it has for the woman.

That is why it is terribly easy for a woman, after a casual episode, to be overcome with disgust. That is why, as a general rule—to which there are some exceptions, of course—the woman cannot indulge in the same kind of promiscuous behaviour which need not inflict the least psychic damage upon a man. It's no good kicking against this. It's just one more of the facts of Nature. And it is a fact of such importance that both men and women should be perfectly aware of it, and of the results it may bring about if flouted. If a woman becomes a partner in the sexual act, only to discover that it has meant far, far less to the lover than it did to herself, she is liable to receive a very severe shock, which may have deep consequences in her life. If a woman realizes everything involved in casual relationships, and then chooses to enter upon them, well and good; it is her business so long as she fully understands what she is about. But most of them don't.

On the other hand, any decent man who understands the difference between the attitudes of the sexes towards the sexual act, will also have to bear the facts in mind, before he seeks a short pleasure which may have to be bought at the cost of real mental agony, and perhaps breakdown for the woman.

These basic differences between the sexes should be understood, and well understood, by young people before they reach the stage at which they will have to rule their lives by their own decisions. That is why I am so very sure that true marriage guidance must in the end be taken to mean education for marriage. In fact, marriage preparation takes place during the first fifteen years of our lives. This is no testimonial to the upbringing of those generations now swelling the procession through the divorce courts!

Indeed, I would go further, and say that, in my opinion, the pattern is set, or the road is mapped out, during the very earliest years. Some psychologists improve upon the Jesuits by saying that the pattern of a life is set during the first five years. It seems to me, however, that the first two years are the most formative. For it is then that we receive our impressions most deeply, and are most restrained from expressing our reactions, except by the primitive means of laughing or crying. Speech is a kind of natural safety-valve, through which we work off a great many aggressions and reactions which might otherwise find expression in violent action. Before we attain to speech, many impressions are made, and many emotions "bottled up," which may burst violently out in untidy living in later years.

Perhaps the most harmful thing which parents can do in the upbringing of their children, is to imply from the first that the boy is superior to his sisters by the mere fact of his maleness. In many families, boys are brought up with the idea that merely because they are male, they are the rulers-to-be. Heaven help the wives whom they approach in that frame of mind! And heaven help their own chances of happiness.

On the other hand, girls who have been made to feel (by even the smallest hints and tiniest indications) that they belong to an "oppressed" or "inferior" caste, because they are girls, are likely to react with just that kind of anti-masculine protest which in later life will make it impossible for them to get a clear view of the differences between the sexes. The adaptations which are necessary in order to secure married happiness will not be possible to them.

Children are also brought up, and girls especially, to believe that marriage will "just happen." Some day their Prince, or Princess will come. Nothing could be more pernicious, or more likely to render their married unhappiness almost certain. Young people are carefully prepared for trades and professions. Their parents usually watch over the kind of work into which they shall go, and their first steps in it. How rarely do they do anything positive to ensure that their young people are prepared, in any real sense, for marriage! It is not enough to have a "little talk" with Mary or

John on the night before the wedding. All the damage is done by then. Not only as regards factual ignorance of sex, but also in their whole outlook upon the relationship of the sexes and the nature of marriage.

It is the romantic legend which is to blame, in which marriage has been over-romanticised, over-sentimentalised, and has received every kind of treatment but a practical, commonsense one. It is not enough to look at the decorative side of marriage. Girl and boy should be brought up to realize, not only what they will gain, but what they must give. It is not enough to say, as parents may often be heard saying, "Oh well, if she loves him, that's all right." You can't live on love, or on physical attraction. It is the business of parents so to have trained their child, that he or she will be capable of making a reasonable choice of partner, unblinded by delusion.

There has, for far too long, been an attitude that reality factors should be dismissed in favour of romantic ones. Neither, in fact, should be dismissed. A marriage founded only upon practical considerations is likely, unless contracted between two very mature and experienced people, to be a rather soulless thing. On the other hand, a marriage contracted without regard at all to practical facts, is liable very soon to give rise to the utmost misery.

What we wish for those we love is much what we would wish for ourselves: nothing spectacular, merely the chance to be reasonably contented and fulfilled. This is only possible to the emotionally mature person. Emotional immaturity necessarily implies the making of a very great many quite unnecessary and most painful mistakes. Emotional maturity consists in the realization that marriage is a partnership, from which one will take out just about as much as one has put in. Marriage requires a careful building-up. It requires restraint of human reactions, founded upon an understanding of human nature—and especially of the human nature of the opposite sex. It requires an ability to accept the partner as he or she is. It is no use at all to marry in the hope that you will turn your partner into someone else. Marriage, and living in close community, will make certain modifications, but it will never change the basic character, whose pattern was set long since.

In this connection, let us examine one or two of the difficulties which confront the young people when they have entered on marriage.

The adjustments are not easy. The husband, for example, does not at first find it easy to recognise that his pay-packet is no longer his own, and that he is no longer an entirely free agent. If he has gone into marriage in a bachelor habit of mind, without realising

the need now to control it, then his marriage will head for the rocks. His pay-packet now belongs to "the home" as a unit. His time and liberty are now subject to those restraints which belong to the mere fact that he has entered upon a form of communal life, even if, as yet, it is shared by only one other person. If the man realises these dangers, he will conduct himself accordingly, accepting the new limitations. If the woman understands them, and him, she will make things as easy for him as she can.

It is amazing, by the way, how many women enter upon marriage without having the least idea of the exact state of their future husband's finances. That is to say, they do not know the financial status of that partnership into which they have entered, and which should, from then on, be run as a "firm." If a husband, or an intending husband, refuses to disclose his business, in the running of which she is to share, then a woman is warned by that fact, from the beginning, that all is not well. Her husband does not realise the nature of partnership; there is somewhere in him a streak of emotional infantilism, which may, before all is done, manifest itself in other and still less pleasant ways.

When marriage has been embarked upon, then it is plainly the duty of each partner to understand the way in which the life of the other is occupied, and the nature of their work. The wife should make a point of learning something about her husband's work, in order that she can at least discuss it intelligently, and be a very real moral support when things go wrong. Similarly, the good husband will make it his business to understand all that is involved in the running of his home, so that he in his turn can give sympathy and moral support in the small daily difficulties which confront his partner in her particular sphere.

He should realise, too, that his own life, outside the home, is likely to be far more varied and interesting, bring him more social contacts, than is the life of his wife. He can make up to her for the relatively restricted sphere in which she works, by showing his appreciation of all that she does. Very many discontented and disagreeable wives are merely wilting, like parched flowers, for the word of appreciation which would more than reward them for their humdrum tasks. They feel that all their care goes for nothing, and is taken for granted; often they begin to think that the only way in which to draw attention to what they do, would be to "run away somewhere," so that at least they would be missed! A loving, appreciative word from a husband will mean far more to his wife than anything, more expensive, which he could give her.

A young couple has to make adjustments. They have been brought up, as it were, wearing each a different pair of glasses,

which must now be brought into focus together. A married couple has to find a way to keep romance alive, after the fading of the first sexual rapture. That will only be done by exercising in practical fact a real understanding of each other, and of the different nature of the two sexes.

A wife must make allowances for her husband's emotional immaturity. A husband must try to adapt himself to the demands of his wife's womanly nature. He must remember, above all, that love-making does not start in bed. Many a wife, who has suffered a grouchy husband all the evening, is disgusted when he turns to her in bed on what seems to her to be a purely sexual impulse. If he truly loved and wanted her, for herself, well and good; but she does not want to be used only for his relief. Husbands, therefore, should remember that the sexual act, as the act of love, is a continuous thing. Love should be made all the year round—day out, night in, as we might say!

Young people brought up from the first, with a background of good example, which is so very much more important than precept, will come to understand all these things in time. They will learn to regard marriage, in the early years, as an investment of good will and effort, from which splendid dividends will accrue, dividends, indeed, out of all proportion to the investment. Where marriage is not regarded in this light, when the aim of each partner is only to gain something for self, whether in physical indulgence or in material benefit, then there will never be any dividends, for openly or otherwise, "the firm" will break up.

That is why it is so important that we should not allow our conception of marriage guidance to remain limited to the idea of patchwork, or *ad hoc* advice, to be given to those already in trouble, or those immediately about to enter on marriage. The existing workers in this field do splendid work; but we must agitate for its extension from "marriage guidance" into "marriage preparation." Then, and only then, are marriage and home likely to be restored to their proper place, as the very basis and foundation of our society.

EUSTACE CHESSER

LETTER TO A CONSCRIPT

Dear D.,

THANK you for your note. I now see that to every occupation there is an occupational disease. The housemaid has her knee, the writer his cramp, the policeman his flat-feet, and the conscript his self-pity.

So before you flounder completely, let me suggest how you can actually exploit your Army career in the interests of your future historical studies. Take an example from Gibbon. Did he not write that he found his service with the South Hampshire Militia "not without use" when it came to writing the history of the later Roman Empire. What did he mean? Subsequently this, I suggest: to his surprise he found himself part of an *organised* body of *unwilling* indviduals, which is the pattern of society as a whole.

But in the Army the contradiction between organisation and unwillingness is far greater. There is far more of each to cope with. It's much easier, therefore, for you to see how it's done. The only person from whom the Army gets willing co-operation is the one who welcomes the enforced simplification of his life. He is positively relieved to find himself freed from the necessity of making up his own mind. He will probably decide to make the Army his career, and emerge in some 40 years' time as a complete automaton. This is the greatest success the Army can achieve.

At the other end of the emotional spectrum is the Army's greatest failure; the type who continually deserts, who is engaged in an unending struggle with authority of every kind. For him there is no distinction between the sergeant-major, the Red-cap, the magistrate, and the policeman. All are his enemies.

Now for the "in-betweens": their attitude ranges all the way from dull acquiescence via resentment to passive obstruction. Their only common feature is that when it comes to the pinch they all obey. It is here, amongst the vast majority, that you must concentrate your efforts and can best exploit that complete lack of privacy of which you complain so bitterly. Those endless periods of waiting in the Naafi, the cook-house, at the M.O.'s—and just waiting—will provide your richest source of material.

How will you set to work? One angle I have already suggested: how are unwilling individuals organised? Another angle is the question Cavour put to himself: why did he do things for Italy that he would never have dreamt of doing in private life? An up-to-date version would be as follows: why is it so much easier to make a man into a guard at a concentration camp than to make the same man beat his wife?

The fear of punishment is only half the answer. Even less, I hope, do you imagine that your comrades actually know what it's all about. On the contrary . . . From my own experience as a recruit I remember how I was detailed with the squad to attend a series of ABCA lectures on the workings of British democracy, i.e. we were being instructed in the very thing we had supposedly taken up arms to defend. What adds to the irony is the fact that the lectures were not given by an Englishman at all but by a refugee schoolmaster.

No, if you wish to answer any of the questions, you must look to another source altogether—the psychological. The Army imposes its will on the individuals who compose it by creating a myth which is accompanied by tangible symbols giving due expression to the myth.

The mental atmosphere which surrounds you, for example, is full of references to the tradition of the Army, the part it plays in the national history, its role in time of trouble, etc., etc. You do not unfortunately have the benefit of compulsorily attending Church parade, otherwise you would also have seen how the religious strain is woven into and reinforces the martial one. Why not attend voluntarily once or twice just to see the process at work?

Secondly, remember that you are not only a member of the British Army but also belong to a particular regiment. This has a myth of its own, compounded of the most heterogeneous elements —the occasion when it was first raised, the actions in which it displayed especial heroism, the personalities with which it has been associated, and any out of the way incidents from its past. If you go to the unit library you are sure to find there some volume giving the details in full.

That is one side of the picture. Now turn to the symbols. These are concretisations of the myth. How often, for example, have you been told that when you salute an officer, it's not the man himself you're saluting but the King's Commission? This is not, as you may have thought, intended to render palatable an act of respect to someone who may be totally unworthy of it. It is intended to force you into the proper attitude of humility towards the symbol of authority. Or again, take your regimental cap-badge. I am sure it's connected very closely with the regimental past. And every time you polish it, the myth of the regiment imprints itself more and more firmly on your outlook. The same goes for all the other "bull" you are obliged to perform. It is the equivalent of an act of worship.

Even the Reveillé call may be an element in the myth. On different occasions during my own Army career I was awakened by the Sudanese, the Calcutta and the African Reveillé, each one being

linked to some particular episode from the past of the unit I belonged to at the time. To cut a long story short, all your army life is a process of indoctrination to the influence of sights and sounds.

In the Navy, I'm told, this respect for symbols as opposed to things, is carried to such an extent that in shore establishments rooms become cabins, corridors become decks, and kitchens become galleys. To clinch the point, what is the first thing troops do when they mutiny? They tear off their officers' badges and haul down the flag. Even in their disaffection they are blinded by symbols. The real seat of power is almost invariably neglected till later.

To return to history, what is it, after all, but the response to different systems of belief incorporated in correspondingly different sets of symbols? When you parade on the barrack-square you are, although you haven't realised it, being subjected to substantially the same influences as were the members of the National Convention in the 18th century, the Crusaders in the 11th century, the Roman legions in the 2nd century. To go further back in history you will find in a native tribe the same taboo as that which forbids the soldier to cross the barrack-square when by himself. It is holy ground. No doubt you will be able to think of other examples while you wait for the inspecting officer to come round.

In the long run all these influences, external though they are, add up to quite a powerful result. No one emerges from military service the same as he went in. Nor should you even try to do so. In fact, the more you surrender yourself, the more you will realise what is happening to you, and the more you will understand the mechanism of society when you come out. Bull and bear it!

Yours,

N.

LIONEL KOCHAN

REVIEWS

THE CRISIS IN THE UNIVERSITY. By Sir Walter Moberly. Pp. 311. S.C.M., 15s.

No one is better qualified than Sir Walter Moberly to write on the English universities: no one knows and loves them better; and he has been unusually *active* within them, and has seen them comprehensively from the outside, close at hand and from a judicial distance. Because he is so well qualified his book has made a stir. The authority of his own name is reinforced by his speaking for more than himself alone; the book is in the style and has the force and nature of a report, an interim report of the results of prolonged discussions which have been going on amongst a few university teachers who are Christians concerned about the responsibility of Christian teachers in the universities to-day. The problems of the universities to-day have been under discussion for some years in the Press and in publications, and this book serves to focus the discussion as it has developed so far on the issues which have been raised.

The crisis has two aspects. (1) The universities, old and new, are being required to take an increasing number of students selected for intellectual ability, and to fit them for their work in the world, and this is a job at variance with the assumptions, traditions, methods, values, and ideals of the older universities and with the tastes, habits, and interests of their dons; moreover, increasing specialization means increasing segration and the impoverishment of education. (2) This major problem of re-orientation and new development has to be tackled by a staff deeply divided on ultimate questions in a world similarly divided; and these differences are aggravated by a refusal to face them, an exclusion of controversies from the university, a taking refuge in chronic agnosticism, and the perpetuation of shams, with the result that many of the able and experienced students have more maturity and real wisdom than their teachers.

The great prestige of the German universities during the 19th century promoted the ideal of the "liberal" university, as an institution absolutely independent of outside control, devoted to disinterested research and the attainment of excellence according to the highest standards of scientific scholarship; and this ideal involved freedom of thought, detachment, and the exclusion of commitment, partisanship, and concern with practical interests. This ideal modified in this country the different ideal and tradition of Oxford and Cambridge, closely connected with the older public schools and the families of a ruling class, and practising a regimen formed on

the idea of a gentleman, finishing schools rather than universities in the German sense. But the new conditions of social life and university education in this country have shattered both ideals: the vital culture of the time is centred in applied science and technology; those eligible for university education are no longer drawn from a social élite with common cultural background and tradition; the universities cannot hold aloof from the conflicts of the age, and are bound to consider what their specfic contribution to the issues is to be; and they can no longer be altogether independent of the public purse nor indifferent to public requirements.

Sir Walter Moberly as a passionately convinced Christian cannot be satisfied with less than a university committed to Christianity. But he recognizes that it would not be possible and would not be fair, and he thinks it would not be desirable, to bring back an official Christianity. Convinced Christians are a small minority; unless they have the conviction, energy, and right-mindedness to leaven the whole lump, they need not hope and do not deserve to regain their influence; and he thinks it is much healthier for all that Christianity should be reduced to this spiritual footing. But with Christians, liberal humanists, and scientific humanists (Marxists) competing for influence within the universities, the battle in the world is joined inside, and the universities, although officially neutral, are no longer indifferent. Sir Walter wants to see the issue forced in this way between the rival views of the world; he wants both teachers and students to be forced and helped to make up their minds and commit themselves openly. "As Christians, we must realize that the supreme enemy of our cause is not the ardent atheist, the serious-minded teacher or student who, after due consideration, is impelled to reject Christianity. He is always to be regarded with respect, and in some important ways he is our ally. It is the man of trivial or merely conventional outlook who drifts through life without ever really facing the question. . . . As against such people are linked all those, however sharply opposed their creeds, who stand for intellectual integrity and responsibility. There should be no place for such drifters in the university . . . because they are uneducated, and apparently uneducable in those issues which matter most." But the university is no place for sterile intransigent oppositions. However divided in their ultimate views, most university teachers are united in loyalty to the intellectual virtues which make the spirit and informing principle of their calling, the craftsmanship of their guild, and in loyalty to the democratic values of their country. On such a basis, men of opposite views can establish, if they will, a personal communication more difficult in the less favourable conditions of the outside world. If it can be nothing more, the university must at least be a

battle ground where the real intellectual issues of our time are fought out and their protagonists are confronted with one another. In these wrestlings it must stimulate the characteristic academic excellencies of precision, comprehensiveness and candour, and the penetration which discerns the principles underlying practical disagreements." But the commitment of a university requires further, in Sir Walter's view, that these very matters of practical agreement be probed and explored to see how far they are genuine and coherent and to what theoretical positions they lead. And in all this he would have the convinced Christians (and by inference the other convinced groups) play the role of a "creative minority," seek to influence the university as decisively as the Utilitarians or the Fabians in their day influenced national policy and administration, by the sheer reasonableness and efficiency of their arguments and purposes. The whole argument turns on the question of what from a Christian point of view is to be done, in default of a common aim, to establish enough unity of purpose to form the coherent responsible policies now required of the universities on such questions as, relations with the State, the diversity of studies and displacement of the old accepted standards of excellence and of common culture, the development or abandonment of Education Departments and extra-mural work, the community life of non-residential universities.

Is there really a crisis, or is it a crisis made by a Christian who has obviously been influenced by the Existentialists, for whom human existence is crisis? Can the practical problems be dealt with in a practical way without raising theoretical and spiritual issues? Sir Walter Moberly, and it is highly characteristic of him, on all the questions discussed in his book states the views to which he is opposed as forcibly, fully, and vividly as his own, and not infrequently, as with Cicero, they are more convincing. For those who don't share his religious faith his view is likely to seem strained. Yet it is the view which prevails to-day, because Christians and Marxists have entrenched themselves in doctrinal positions, the view, namely, that all our virtues and values and purposes necessarily imply some general view of the world and therefore ought to be consistently derived from it, and similarly that the study and teaching of a subject implies a general view of the world and should therefore be explicitly informed by it. (See, especially, Arnold Nash, *The University and the Modern World*). Liberal humanists are shy of this view, and are at home in the "liberal" university where the attempt is made to pursue the subject for its own sake and to exclude final views from the purview of the university. For this very reason, the "liberal" university is in the eyes of their critics a bourgeois humanist university in which impartiality merely means

teaching everything from a secular-humanist point of view by the mere fact of omission. The claim is that Christian teachers must be allowed to teach their subjects as Christians and Marxists as Marxists, so long as they do not infringe the intellectual obligations and objective standards of university teachers. So much must be granted, and, of course, it is in fact the practice. It doesn't lead to the coherence which a university ought to have, but that worries the humanist far less than the Christian or Marxist. The aspiration of the Marxist to control the university and of the Christian to inspire and interpret it, however, shatter the old "liberal" idea of the university, and challenge the humanist university teacher to re-think his position. He is convinced that the subject is the thing, but he has to make that faith good in this context of conflicting treatment of the subject and new social purposes for education. The old attitudes are no longer real. If the Christians and Marxists know what they want, do the liberal humanists?

It is true that the present turmoil of social change and intellectual conflict disturbs the equilibrium of the university, and it is true that the chaotic university is salt without savour. But the coherence which the university needs at the present time is not the coherence of a common philosophy of life, or an orientation in that direction; it is the coherence of an agreed philosophy of education, an aim considerably more hopeful. It ought to be agreed that the universities are concerned with the discipline and extension of knowledge, and that this vital function preserves their distinction from every other teaching and training institution and closes them against those not intellectually qualified for this discipline and attainment. This assumption is strongly contested, but unless it is accepted the universities remain class strongholds or are invaded, overpowered, and surrender their function. For the rest, the vital disagreement in the philosophy of education is between traditionalists or essentialists and progressives, so-called, those who would found education upon essential doctrines or values or attitudes which are to be put over to the new generations, and those who would shift the seat of authority from the past to the future, who believe that change and novelty are the essentials and want to equip the young with the mind and ability to participate creatively in guided processes of change. The happiest outcome would be a fruitful marriage of both schools, settled to the professional task of promoting the standards, methods, and results of research. Actually, the influence of German and American ideas of university education on the British tradition has had a result not wildly unlike this happy ideal, and the present job is to clarify, criticize, and develop this result into an established

type and method of higher education, and to resist the demands and encroachments which threaten it from many sides.

The differences between classical humanists, scientific humanists, Marxists, and Christians are real enough and, if forced, irreconcilable; but university educators of these persuasions are not irreconcilable on points of educational policy and practice, if they recognize the necessary three-sidedness of university education. It is a problem for the guild, for the fraternity of university teachers and administrators. Here as elsewhere in modern society the pressure of events is forcing on the professions a new corporate responsibility for a major segment of social policy, and new demands require a new professional discipline. Sir Walter Moberly's book, addressed to his fellow Christians in the universities, transcends its immediate purpose and voices the "challenge of our time" to the corporate body of university educators. H.J.B.

GODS AND MEN. By Sir Richard Gregory, Bt., F.R.S. pp. 214. Stuart & Richards. 12s. 6d.

This work, which has as sub-title "A Testimony of Science and Religion," has as its author not only one with exceptional qualifications to speak on science, as a Past President of the British Association and for long years the editor of the principal scientific journal in this country, *Nature,* but also (a rare thing amongst scientists who write upon religion) one who has had a long and deep interest in the subject; so that one gets views that will bear serious examination. Sir Richard Gregory writes benignantly of religion and like many ethicists and liberal theologians he makes interpretations of Christian doctrine and dogma that render them almost tolerable to those who base their views on such matters upon reason. Alas, that there should be Christian pastors and talkative Christian layfolk to disillusion such people! Without Christians, one could almost be a Christian. Gregory's book will probably annoy many Christians who read it, just because of its sweet reasonableness. Reasonableness is not compatible with revealed religion and to indicate that you give pride of place to reason is to indicate to the pedlar of a dogma that you are outside his market.

There are some early chapters which deal with the relation of astronomical knowledge to religion and philosophy, and readers who have not a particular interest in the subject might be well advised to skip them and commence with the more general themes dealt with of the growth and content of religion, religion and social ethics,

and the underlying instincts which provide the driving force of religions. It must not be thought from what has been said about the benignity of the author's attitude to doctrine and dogma that he is unaware of what various types of religionists actually do believe and will insist upon believing despite demonstrated objections to its validity. It is this appreciation of what religion actually does mean to people, this recognition that people do not believe dogmas just because they have not read some 2/- manual on science, this appreciation of the force of the compulsion that makes so many people believe the unbelievable, that makes this work worthy of the attention of the student of ethics and religion and distinguishes it from work by an author who has given no more than first thoughts to religion.

Sir Richard Gregory traces the types of religious beliefs and thought that were incorporated in the Christian religion, showing that a particular religion is basically the sum-total of the popular thought and opinions of the people of a particular civilization and age. He refers to an historical incident in which an early Christian missioner converted ten thousand pagans in a single day, as an example of why pagan customs came to be absorbed into Christianity, which reminds one of Bernard Shaw's saying that to convert a savage to Christianity is to convert Christianity to savagery. The problem is, as the author realizes, to show not why some piece of dogma is found in a religion but rather why some piece is left out. In his account of the formation and development of religions not quite sufficient weight is given to political expediency and the power factor in religion, which is one of the principal driving forces, and perhaps the greatest cohesive force, in religion.

Gregory recognizes the rift between man's genetic and social inheritances. Man is biologically equipped to live as a simple food gatherer and has to live in a complex social environment. He has not only to live through ten thousand years of social development in his childhood but throughout his life to live in large measure against, not with, his instincts. This accounts in great part for the discrepancy between demand and performance in social conduct, a factor ignored by Christians which accounts for the doctrine of Original Sin.

The book is brought to a conclusion with an examination of the concept of progress and an affirmation of the author's belief in Humanism as, in his words, the integration of all human influences which promote the development of the human race, whether it includes the teaching of a particular religion or not.

M. L. BURNET

THE CRISIS OF THE HUMAN PERSON. By J. B. Coates. pp. 256. Longmans. 12s. 6d.

Nothing but good need be said of this book, for most of the reviews which have appeared have been unworthy of it. Years ago Mr. Coates, dissatisfied with the negatives of rationalism and the inadequacies of science and of ethical humanism, set out to find something that made sense of the whole experience of man and provided a standpoint for a modern synthesis. He found what he was looking for in Personalism, and particularly he made his home in the thought of Berdyaev. This book, although it expounds the thought of some dozen contemporary thinkers, is certainly not a journalistic piece of *vulgarisation,* for it is fundamentally, though not formally, a piece of autobiography, the patient journeying of a true eclectic, standing by the fundamental assumptions and principles of his own persuasion but seriously looking for the greatest measure of accord, believing in the possibility of a common faith and working towards mutual understanding between the rival thinkers of the day. Mr. Coates' unusual modesty, temperateness, and integrity, matched with patience, intelligence, and skill in his critical exposition of these representative modern thinkers with whom he is in sympathy, in whole or in part, make him impressive and persuasive to any reader not too violently prejudiced.

His book begins with a useful survey of Personalism, its roots and branches, and the movement developed by Mounier through his journal *Esprit.* He then expounds the thought of Berdyaev, who has influenced him most, and of Buber and Mumford with whom also he is in full sympathy. There follows a critical account from the Personalist standpoint of Mannheim, Laski, and Burnham, described as neo-marxists; of Heard, Huxley, and Koestler, described as defeatists; and of Read as anarchist. There is *A Personalist View of Sex and Marriage* and a final chapter *Theism and Humanism.* The loose plan of the book serves the author's purpose and he is able to show that a personalist can maintain his view without evading the real issues and problems of the time with which other thinkers are grappling. Indeed, a great deal of his criticism is pertinent and sticks fast, and Mr. Coates displays very well in the course of his examination the advantages of the personalist standpoint. If anyone has the idea that personalism is individualism, this book will show how mistaken he is. Personalists affirm the autonomy and supremacy of the developed spirit in each person, and attack every doctrine which belittles, overrides, or leaves it out, but from this standpont they are eclectics, accepting and using contributions from marxism, christianity, science, and all important

sources. It is by no means, as may be supposed, a peevish negative reaction to the tendencies of the age.

One can agree that the instinct of the personalists is right, and be profoundly grateful to the movement for trying to restore in a conciliatory spirit what has been left out of the most characteristic modern thought. But whether they have found the terms in which this can be done is a question. Their syncretism recalls the late modernist movements in the historical religions, particularly Christian Modernism, and it is not at all surprising that the warmest welcome Mr. Coates's book has received has come from Dr. Inge. But Christian Modernism is a lost cause. There is a return to firmness of doctrine and the sharpness of alternatives. This means something, and it is a question whether Personalists recognize just what it does mean. It is a good thing that Personalists should denounce and go on denouncing the inadequacies of orthodoxy and of the many modern forms of humanism; but is Personalism able to put the matter right? There is not likely to be much advance until we have a critique of science, of history, of value, and of the person far profounder than any we have yet had. Mr. Coates speaks of the freedom and creativity of the human spirit, of universality and objective value, of a purposive universe, of God: an honest thinker may be compelled to deny all these in every absolute sense, and still have, with reason, a high place and destiny for the human person. The assumptions and the method of Personalism make it unlikely that we shall get from this source the profoundly adequate philosophy which can restore and safeguard the human person. Nevertheless, their challenge and their temper, as represented in this book, are of very great value and there is no doubt that they are making a constructive contribution to the thought of our time which will help a great deal. H.J.B.

PARENTS AND CHILDREN

PARENTS' QUESTIONS. Gollancz. 10s. 6d.

Mr. P. H. Newby, the novelist, in a broadcast talk entitled "The Muse in the Nursery," has spoken of the contemporary novel which is often about children—and as often as not unhappy children too. He says: "They are not (as were the children in Victorian novels) treated with any great brutality; they are not very often beaten by their parents, or shut up in coal cellars, or told that if they are naughty they will burn perpetually in hell-fire. The grown-ups in the modern novel about children seem hardly robust enough for this kind of cruelty. They inflict misery because they are miserable themselves; they are busy quarrelling with one another, or worrying about money, or politics, or they are being unhappy in one or other

of the subtle ways that modern psychology has discovered for us. That is to say, their distress seems to make them unimaginative and intolerant of the demands that their children make upon them. As a result they fail to act as shock-absorbers between the big bad world and the children in their care."

Mothers and fathers of to-day will perhaps see themselves and their children in this description. Often they are painfully aware of their own shortcomings as parents, and sometimes are led by an acute awareness of the children's problems to identification with their children (thereby escaping from the burdens of parenthood). Indeed, in some families before the war this used to be pathetically underlined by the practice of Christian names all round and no father and mother nonsense!

But modern psychology has done more for us than to discover subtle ways of being unhappy and making our children unhappy—not to mention letting them make us unhappy! Our ancestors were blissfully sure of themselves perhaps, but were they such good parents? In our unhappiness and uncertainty we have begun to learn more, and we know more than we did. The intensive study of individual children and adults by the methods of psycho-analysis, correlated with the careful observation of physiological and mental growth and behaviour in children, has given us findings of real knowledge which can be relied on and to which the young parent is now ready to turn. Unlike the teachings of an earlier age, they are not arbitrary pronunciamentos. With their help, mothers and fathers can have a new understanding of their children and can find a greater pleasure in their growing up.

Parents' Questions, written by members of the Child Study Association of America, is something more than its title might seem to imply. It is not merely another "quiz" book. It is based on questions asked by worried parents, and does give definite answers. The questions asked are the kind of questions we all want answered. (The differences between American and English life are not as great as one would have imagined.) "Should you punish a child when he admits he has disobeyed you and says he is sorry?" "We are getting a divorce . . . I don't know how to explain it to our son." "My fifteen-year-old daughter dresses in the most outlandish way. Is there anything we mothers can do?" "My boy and girl quarrel constantly. Do you think I ought to interfere or let them fight it out?" "Can we prevent our children from using slang?" "My six-months-old baby wakes up and cries at night for no apparent reason. How can I train her to have good sleeping nights?" These are random samples.

Opening the book anywhere, the reader is bound to find accurate

information about the child's physical and mental activities and a page or so of wise answer to some particular problem; but read it right through—a thing not hard to do—and a design appears; the design of growth in the child, the perspective for the parent, affording support and understanding in his and her child's acute trouble. Throughout, this sense of growth is kept—of growing pains, but also of experience that is widening. Each chapter, headed "Habit Training," "Health," "Discipline," "Sex," "No Two Alike," "The Problem Child," and so on, explores the ground first and then goes on to the questions and their answers which range from the earliest months to the almost grown-up. In this way the authors invite the parent to ask herself: "My boy is four now; how will things look to him and to me when he is seven or eight?" "Am I asking too much of him now?"

Tolerance and capacity to wait for the child's development are encouraged and backed by the support that the authors give in their expressed conviction "that most parents are able to meet the numerous demands of daily living as most children are amenable to the guidance they need for becoming normal adults in a complex society." Above all, the enduring yet ever-changing pleasures of being a mother or father are made clear—the joy in watching your children growing up. The advice given is good. For instance: "A slap doesn't let a baby know what he *can* do. Discipline should give a child a feeling of what is good and permissible as well as what is bad and forbidden." Again, about a crying baby and the vexed question of picking up or no: "Don't be afraid to give in. You'll want to feel your way carefully." There is good sound advice for all those situations where practical and emotional needs are so mixed up. I like particularly the answer to a question about an illness where an operation is necessary. The advice is refreshingly shrewd and humane, enabling the parents to make the best, for their child and themselves, of this, for them, strange and rather inhuman world of the hospital.

To turn to some defects in the book. There is perhaps some superficiality and prudishness in the chapter on sex; an adopted child should of course know of his adoption, but not before he is old enough to understand—say six or seven—and his adoptive parents are the *real* parents (not the physical parents).

Religion is only lightly touched upon. What is a Rationalist to do about religious instruction in schools? The answer, to my mind, is to put up with it, as things are. If we ourselves maintain and affirm in our own homes whatever convictions we have thoughtfully arrived at, there need be little fear of our children overlooking our point-of-view. A child naturally responds to an honest and

scientific way of looking at things and will respect us if we are not bigoted.

This is a singularly honest, imaginative, and informative book. It will reach and touch the general public; and even the experienced psychologist, teacher, and doctor can learn something from it.

JAMES M. TAYLOR

GROW UP AND LIVE. By Eustace Chesser. Pelican Books. 1s. 6d.

This book is conversational in style, which may or may not enable the author the better to make contact with young people who are just becoming grown up. One can imagine its breaking with emancipating light and constructive relief upon many who have never met with the modern brand of balanced good sense in the grown ups with whom they have had to deal. But to some others it comes with devastating and blighting insipidity turning all their own good sense and cherished wisdom to dust in the mouth.

One wonders whether this easy chatty writing will after all get under young people's skin and help them to straighten themselves out and prepare them for real problems and strong emotions. Yet undoubtedly this air of dispelling all dark shrinkings and all secret guilt, of making everything seem natural and all right, and then showing one how to deal with it sensibly and with proper consideration for others has a certain effectiveness. At every step it is well done and every possible sound thing seems to be said. The attempt to make people in their teens realise that their parents have themselves developed and are still developing is particularly good and a really deep impression is built up of how wrong treatment by one generation of parents gives a twist to a child who proceeds to give another twist to yet another generation when she or he in turn becomes a parent. The desire of the author to break through this self-perpetuating chain of distortion shines through the book and is infectious, giving the whole a moral impressiveness it otherwise lacks.

There is a curious flavour about this approach of the practical psychologist: the impulse to murder is in us all and nothing to worry about—it only has to be looked at to dissolve; everyone lies and steals for various reasons when young, but that is only a phase. The grim drama of corrupt maturity and the obstinate conflicts of corrupt society do not cast deep shadows over the book nor does the integrity involved in surmounting corruption and suffering lend it tension. There is an utter failure to suggest the quality of great emotion in dealing with sex, nor would one suspect that it might be an almost irresistible desire. There is thus something positively deceptive about the helpful light which is disseminated.

But whether a better book could be written to help young people in this sort of way is another matter. It cries out to be supplemented by great literature, not to say counteracted.

VIRGINIA FLEMMING

LEGAL PHILOSOPHY FROM PLATO TO HEGEL. By Huntington Cairns. pp. 567. The John Hopkins Press (London: O.U.P.) $7.50.

To go through the philosophers sorting out their ideas on law may seem to the empirically minded an otiose exercise in diffuse erudition. Any such view would merely reflect ignorance both of the great complexity and confusion of the modern age and of the power and relevance of the great speculative philosophies, even of the remote Greek age. A study of Plato's theory of education is still a stimulating and fruitful way of making a contribution to a modern theory. Still more does a modern theory of law need to take account of the handling of law in the great philosophical systems, both because the synoptic view is a standpoint for insights lost to those who remain on the plain of practice, especially in these days of multiplied statutes and detailed administrative regulations; and also because most of the prevailing general conceptions and assumptions in the field of law derive from the philosophers, rather than from the jurists themselves. Moreover the present turn in the general philosophical debate interests jurists closely, for philosophy is engaged in arduous self-criticism and self-questioning and if it is really decided that most of the traditional problems and pursuits must be abandoned as pseudo-problems and vain pursuits, a similar consequence will follow for the theory of law. Nineteenth century positivism did abandon the quest for a just legal order, treating legal science, like economics and other social sciences, on strictly determinist lines, excluding valuational judgements. Twentieth century logical-positivism carries out the same purge by different methods. But the end is not yet, and valuational judgements and the notion of natural law have so far proved irrepressible. No doubt some theoretical order can be introduced into legal practice without raising the ghosts of insoluble problems which haunt philosophy, by the use of hypothesis and postulates; but the standpoint and criteria for a general criticism of law can hardly be obtained in this way. For the jurist it is a question of knowing which hopes he must abandon and what hopes he may legitimately entertain. It is no longer possible to believe with Plato or Hegel that there is a rational essence of law which is a revelation of the real, nor to assume with Maine that historical society progresses from Status to Contract. Political violence in our time has more than once shifted the basis of law and transformed its meaning;

but even law as the direct and avowed instrument of power cannot altogether expel nor dispense with such other elements as reason and custom. Law is too immemorial and indispensable to be reduced to simplicity either in theory or in practice. This is the lesson learned alike from the history of society and the history of philosophy.

The problems of law determined by philosophy and the problems of law determined by history are not necessarily the same, but that does not mean that the discussions of philosophers in this field have been at random and in vain; the theoretical explication of principles on philosophic lines enriches the conceptual resources and refines the thinking of jurists and lawyers dealing with the practical problems set by society. And there are perpetual and basic problems which inhere both in the notion of law and in its practice, such as the reconciliation of stability with change, of freedom with order, of law with equity; such problems are involved in all aspects and applications of law and demand the thorough and comprehensive treatment of philosophical discussion. The immediately important practical problem of the interpretation of statutes is not even yet governed by a settled theory. At this moment of writing Lord Justice Denning in a useful case has reiterated the traditional principle of interpretation by intention, on which *The Times* comments with approval on the ground that mutual confidence between Parliament and the Judges is imperative in a country with a Parliamentary system and an independent Judiciary.

But the point at issue goes beyond the use of theory in the solution of practical problems; it is the question of whether there can be a valid general theory of law. Mr. Cairns is very seriously (and capably) exploring this important question. The book under review is the third of a trilogy, of which the two preceding volumes attempted to look at law from the standpoint of the social sciences and from that of logic and the empirical sciences. Mr. Cairns proposes to present and develop his conclusions in a fourth volume. In the present book his account of the views of each of the philosophers he deals with is full, accurate, and lucid, and the book would have been well worth writing for that alone; but the observations by which Mr. Cairns keeps in the middle distance the controversies of the present time, both philosophical and legal, and in the background the ultimate question make the book what it purports to be, much more than a history of legal philosophy, part of the prolegomena to a modern theory. Law is so intimately connected with all the social sciences and with all the branches of philosophy proper and is so solidly grounded in actuality that like

education it is, as it were, an embodiment of philosophy. It holds a key position in a possible synthesis of modern thought and social policy, and therefore the question of a general theory of law is of the greatest interest. The intrinsic interest of the question is reinforced by its growing practical importance, for modern societies are dominated by law, and the legal profession is being required to take corporate responsibility for the social policy in regard to law. Law is the servant of several masters, whose peremptory demands are often in conflict and whose relative status and authority are constantly changing. It cannot rightly aspire to be its own master nor even to be the servant of only one master, but it can insist on having a voice of its own with which to make known its protests and allegiance whilst submitting to the hard facts of service. This is not only the dignity due to law but also the supreme public service which it owes. For all these reasons we are greatly interested in the question of a general theory of law, and we are greatly impressed by the informed and sensitively intelligent contribution which Mr. Cairns has already made. H.J.B.

DEMOCRACY AND THE QUAKER METHOD. By Francis E. Pollard, Beatrice E. Pollard, and Robert S. W. Pollard. pp. 154. The Bannisdale Press.

"The central idea was the complete elimination of majorities and minorities; it became the Quaker custom to reach all decisions in unity . . . and it cultivated a consciousness of the group as an organ of the Spirit." This quotation from *Mysticism and Democracy in the English Commonwealth* by Rufus Jones sums up the theme of Quaker Method which this book examines.

It reveals well how the Quaker faith in the inner light in every individual has led them to reconcile respect for individual points of view with arrival at group unanimity. Because the inner light reveals the Truth it will reveal the same Truth to each individual if only all seek it "in the spirit." This is the basic faith and the group discipline is that each must come ready to listen and reconsider, wishing to understand others and to make his own views and feelings understood with patient care. Each must feel accepted and trusted so that no one is put on the defensive; all must reject the impulse to override others. The discovery of a policy upon which all agree must be the constant objective, so that the unity of the society is also in itself something to be cherished. Silent waiting upon the Light is an instrument used by Friends to recall them as a group to the proper frame of mind when disagreements are acute, as well as to prepare them for the consideration of business and as a form of worship. Business and Worship are insepar-

able since business must be considered "in the spirit" of truth and unity.

Valuable descriptions are given of the working of the Quaker Method and valuable examples are given of historic problems and how they were met. An account is also given of the manifold "concerns" which are carried on by Quakers by this method of reaching group decisions. There is also a rough survey of the extent to which the method is in fact already used outside the Society of Friends; the object of the book being of course to suggest that it might profitably be examined and applied much more widely than it is. A weak spot in the book is the too brief reference to procedure at Cabinet meetings, for joint responsibility has led to the development of a technique which avoids counting heads but seeks solutions that all are prepared to support. There is an interesting parallel between the task of the clerk of the Quaker meeting in drawing up the minutes of the meeting and the difficult work carried out by civil servants in drawing up the minutes of Cabinet meetings. The task of the Prime Minister as chairman responsible for eliciting a unanimous conclusion is one for which a Quaker training would seem well suited.

In contrast to the very cursory treatment given to Cabinet procedure a long and fascinating account of the way in which the Board set to work to produce the Lilienthal Report on the Control of Atomic Energy is quoted from the *Saturday Review of Literature*.

As one reads one feels that here are being examined the principles and spirit of all valuable conversation and discussion. The paradox is emphasised that feeling for freedom and feeling for group unity are really related. Unity is broken by those who lack feeling for the freedom and experience of others. Respect for each in the search for truth creates group unity, and in the unity created by pooling experience and facing facts in the desire for a right decision agreement is reached. The gravest defects of our party system of democratic government are exactly those which the Quaker method and discipline surmount. The disastrous tendency of an opposition to exploit discontent and misunderstanding, thus making it harder for a government courageously to present the facts and propose necessary action, prevents any creative discussion. A very original light is thrown by the book upon the assumptions underlying Russian procedure.

The authors do not suggest using the Quaker Method to create a wider measure of common outlook amongst groups of people at present outside the fold of any Christian fellowship, but clearly it is supremely suitable. All those interested in building up a common Humanist outlook and overcoming the helpless isolation of individuals should read this book. VIRGINIA FLEMMING

PHILOSOPHY FOR PLEASURE. By Hector Hawton. pp. 201. Watts. 10s. 6d.

Only those who have tried to lecture or write on the history of philosophy will know just how successful Mr. Hawton has been in telling his story. He seems never to forget for whom he is writing and why he is writing it, and he communicates the zest of his own interest in the game whose course he describes. It is an advantage for his purpose that he is not bred in any of the schools. He is the commentator excited by the sight of the ball in play, and though his heart (with reason) is on the side of the empiricists he is just as ready to bring out the brilliant performance of the metaphysicians. The result really is "philosophy for pleasure," which of course is not at all the same thing as philosophy without tears. The reader must not expect to rise from the pleasure of reading this book with a knowledge of philosophy painlessly acquired. Mr. Hawton is not a charlatan, and promises no such thing. What can be safely promised is that any reader without any previous knowledge of philosophy, who has any intellectual taste and aptitude for it, will find here a stimulus and a guide, and can go on to get for himself the aesthetic thrill of Hegel's synoptic view or Kant's architectonic argument or Russell's austere analysis.

The beautifully effective interweaving of description and quotation, and the lucidity and connectedness of the exposition, the enthusiasm and skill of the pilot, are all quite admirable until one comes to the important chapter on the New Logic, where the reader is likely to get a bit baffled. Mr. Hawton is hardly to be blamed, for the difficulties are insurmountable: nobody who is not already familiar with the uses and limitations of Aristotelian logic can possibly appreciate (still less criticize) the modification and generalization of traditional logic which has been accomplished. Nobody can hope to convey even the agreed results of close, technical, and prolonged discussions between philosophers to uninformed readers in a way that makes them mean what they do mean. But he can say enough to make them know how far they are interested and want to pursue the matter for themselves; and this Mr. Hawton does, excellently.

There is one observation that must be made, on the perspective of the book. Pleasure in metaphysics or logic or epistemology as they have been recently developed is an illicit pleasure unless one is seriously interested in science and has a working knowledge of one of the sciences. The question, What can I know? as it has come to be asked by philosophers is a refinement of scientific inquiry. On the other hand, the question, What shall I do? is of quite general interest, and it has been philosophically handled and

refined and elaborated quite as much and to as much purpose as the question of knowledge. Indeed it is not too much to say that in one form or another it has been the central question in the thought of all of the philosophers dealt with by Mr. Hawton. Even Hume said that what he was primarily concerned to do was to clarify ethics, and regarded his work in that field as his real monument, and indeed by its influence on Bentham alone this part of his philosophy had enormous practical consequences; and Kant's philosophy was as much an answer to Hume's ethics as to his epistemology. Moreover in most philosophies the problems of ethics and of epistemology converge or overlap. Now there is simply no reason on earth why Mr. Hawton should not have confined himself as he has to the philosophical themes of metaphysics and epistemology, but it is extraordinary that in writing for newcomers he does not give any hint that philosophy has a third dimension in the theory of conduct and values which he is leaving out for his own purpose. This is all the more strange because he crosses the line into this dimension at more than one point and ends up in its depths. Of course this is an understandable oversight which can be corrected in a few words without upsetting the structure of the book; and it is only important because the book is written for those who are not versed in the subject.

It has been remarked (by Leslie Stephen) that philosophical theories live long after their brains have been knocked out. When their invincible vitality is enhanced by the liveliness of the brains which their expositor lends them the ballet they perform is an exhilarating spectacle. H.J.B.

UNDER TWO DICTATORS. By Margarete Buber. pp. 331. Gollancz. 21/-.

Margarete Buber spent two years in a Soviet prison camp at Karaganda in Siberia because she was the wife of a leading German Communist who was in opposition to the Stalinist policy. With the coming of the Nazi-Soviet Pact she was handed over to the German authorities and spent five years in the Nazi Concentration Camp at Ravensbruck, only to be released on the termination of the war when she had a narrow escape from falling once again into Soviet hands. For any one who has ever had any experience of the loss of personal freedom, even in the mild form found in a military unit, and who is possessed of a vivid imagination and therefore of the type that values freedom highly, nothing can come new in the telling of such horrors, given the general information of the set-up of the political regimes concerned. Solon is reported

to have said, "Call no man happy until he is dead," and taking a slightly less fatalist view of the human situation one might well say, "Call no man unhappy until he is in a Concentration Camp."

It seems almost brutal in the face of such a story of personal human misery to attempt to assess the significance of these Camps in an abstract manner, but this is all that is left for the reviewer unless he merely attempts to enumerate the almost endless incidents of horror. These concentration camps can be best understood against the general background of conditions of which they form but a part. In the case of the Soviet camp the background is a conscripted people, and we can understand the motives for this as we had to undergo the same experience ourselves in the last war. Conscription takes place because a re-disposition of the productive community is necessary and many people are put into jobs that they would not voluntarily undertake. Unlike Britain, the Soviet Union contains vast tracts of almost desert country which the Communists want to develop. These Concentration Camps, or Labour Camps as they are more politely called, serve a useful purpose to the regime in providing labour for the areas most desolate and lacking in amenities, and also provide a threat and a punishment for those working outside in far from easy conditions. An examination of the laws relating to Labour in the Soviet Union shows that the worker is tied to his employment at the discretion of the management and that he can be shifted anywhere the management may require him. There are severe penalties for carelessness and bad time-keeping. We can understand the Russian picture if we have experienced military discipline of the old type or know what goes on in a Glass House, the Army prison.

The place of the civil conscription that is found in Russia was taken to some extent in this country by starvation in the comparable period of development of the thirties and forties of last century. On the other hand, with a free market for labour the employer who wanted to open an enterprise in a place with less than average amenities had to pay for it, and this was a good thing for if it is profitable to go to some out of the way place to exploit mineral or some other form of wealth it is worth paying an extra price for doing so. The fulfilment of human welfare should be the aim and guide of human enterprise.

The other main factor in the Soviet background is the totalitarian party system of government and the need to dispose of the opponents of the ruling sect. This is a factor for which there are no pros but only cons. The prescription here is the abolition of the system and its replacement by some form of representative democracy. The number of political prisoners where political

democracy holds sways is seldom calculable in more than twos and threes. With regard to the economic arguments for conscription, the answer must be that the gains are outweighed by disadvantages, that free enterprise has proved capable of gigantic production. It is far more fruitful to tackle the elimination of the undesirable features of private enterprise piecemeal than to mount the tiger of totalitarianism.

M. L. BURNET

THE HOWARD JOURNAL, 1948-49. 1s.

This year's issue of *The Howard Journal* includes an editorial commentary on the Criminal Justice Act, a summary and analysis of the arguments used in both Houses on the Death Penalty, and comment on the Royal Commission's Report on Justices of the Peace, and on the Criminal Statistics for 1947. The writer on the statistics concludes by wishing that Magistrates and Judges would draw their conclusions about the state of crime direct from the Criminal statistics, and not from the "sad, cynical, or angry utterances of the public moralists." In 1947, "115,672 people were found guilty of indictable offences, the proportion of males to females being six to one. Two-thirds of them stole. A fifth of them broke into buildings to do it. *A third of them were under seventeen.*"

An extract from an article by a Norwegian who served a sentence in an English prison is of special interest. He criticizes the policy of "reform prisons" in which greater facilities are allowed for intercourse between the prisoners. He tries to show the process by which in such circumstances all the psychological and situational pressures conduce to the assimilation of all prisoners to the worst types of confirmed criminal who are the natural and permanent rulers of the prison underworld. Similarly, Dr. Frey, Magistrate of the Basel Juvenile Court, in a valuable lecture to be republished as a pamphlet, describes approved schools as "downright centres of infection." The remedy is a far more careful classification, with variety of place and treatment to suit the case.

The reviews include one by Dr. Grünhut of Dr. Kogon's documentary study of the German concentration camps, a book of permanent importance and outstanding interest. Dr. Grünhut's own new book, a comparative study of Penal Reform, is also reviewed, and the first volume of Dr. Radzinowicz's *A History of English Criminal Law and its Administration from* 1750, the first major study written from the social point of view. Dr. Grünhut, Dr. Radzinowicz, and Dr. Hermann Mannheim, three distinguished refugees, have already vastly stimulated here the study of criminology in which this country has been so backward.

CORRESPONDENCE

Religious Humanism and the Unconscious

We cannot deepen our Humanism into a religion unless we are prepared to recognize that a large and important part of our minds is unconscious. We tend to make the mistake of confusing the rational with the conscious, and, on that assumption, of classing as irrational all that is unconscious. Writers on psycho-therapy have shown what rapid and accurate reasoning can, on occasion, be carried out and acted upon by the unconscious mind, even in opposition to conscious thought. Even if we do not allow this as a warrant that any confidence can be put on the unconscious as a guide to rational life, at least let us admit that conscious thought is far from being all rational thought. Since the conscious is not synonymous with the rational, we do not have to assume that the unconscious is synonymous with the irrational, and therefore unworthy of any consideration whatever.

If our Humanism is to be a religion supplying all the needs of our mental life, we must appreciate clearly the distinction between the inner life and the outer. Mrs. Flemming in her article on *Life Without Revelation* in the last issue of *The Plain View* writes:—

"To tip the balance between better and worse here to-day, to contribute towards tipping the balance between better and worse to-morrow, are motives so overwhelming, experiences so all-pervading that life seems hardly to hold room for more."

But life does hold very much more than that. That makes up the totality, and it is indeed an all-absorbing totality, of our outer conscious life. But it is only the external, ethical expression of the inner life which is partly conscious and very largely unconscious. It is the practical side of life and leaves out of account altogether the speculative side. Unless religious Humanism can supply the spiritual basis for ethical activity, it will not meet with marked success.

Mrs. Flemming writes also that we who live in terms other than a relationship to God "have with the arduous care of an original thinker to find the terms through which to express ourselves precisely." But religious experience is not of a type that can be expressed in precise terms. Indeed nothing could be less precise than the expression "relationship to God" which is open to the vaguest and widest interpretation imaginable. To insist too greatly on precise definition is to make Humanism an academic study rather than a religion.

The principal difficulty which confronts us in giving flesh and blood to our rational view of religion is the phase at which our

British philosophy has arrived. Note what Rudolf Metz, an external observer of our indigenous British thought in the last hundred years, has to say about the present position.

"At the present time New Realism and the forces called into activity by it dominate the philosophic field. But the movement is to-day far from being governed by a leading principle or a single leadership. One cannot say that it is uniform in any respect, either in its method, or in its field of enquiry, or its aims, or its inward coherence. Its strength depends not upon its close formation, but upon its openness; not upon its unity, but upon its manifoldness and variety. It is full of inner tensions and contrasts, of inequalities and dissimilarities; it is still in every respect on the march, although we are still uncertain in what direction it is journeying, and whether it will not break up in various directions."

Such a position is contrary to the religious spirit which above everything seeks unity in the midst of multiplicity, and something in the nature of a sustained objective. At one time when the Ethical Movement was founded the position was not so difficult, because the Idealistic school of philosophy had not yet lost its hold on men's minds, and its influence was reflected in the formulations accepted in the Movement. The inspiration which the religious life can derive from current philosophic thought is now relatively slight, especially as some of the leading philosophers are actually opposed to religion or even to speculative philosophy in any form. For this reason many men and women of high intelligence are explicitly advocating an irrational position in religion, and accepting a dual mental life. They are rational and scientific in their professional thinking, but in their religous thinking they have returned to the Christian beliefs which they acknowledge to be irrational. They claim to have found the acceptance of irrationalism re-invigorating to the moral life. The task of Ethical religion is to develop and make explicit a spiritual life which does not involve an initial split of truth into the rational and the irrational variety, because the Ethical view is that the rational principle of the mind is the highest principle, and the acceptance of an avowedly irrational position is a betrayal of the highest. Faithful to the empirical methods which are characteristic of thought at the present time, it is our work patiently to make observations and discover something of the source and of the process of religious experiences which we have.

Let us be clear that we are not committed to rigid disblief in particular dogmas. We retain the freedom to learn fresh truth in any way that is open to experience. Already since the founding of the Ethical Movement we have enlarged our understanding to a point where it has become necessary to discard the formulations

which have their emphasis on a utopian view of the world. This has been due to a deepening of our vision of reality in part brought about by the experiences of the twentieth century. We appreciate the fact that it is always here and now that our mind comes into living relationship with truth, with beauty and with the good. Moment by moment it is that which makes our lives spontaneous, creative, satisfying. We have that or nothing. We learn that there is something in the nature of reality which is complementary to our nature as personalities. And because *we* are persons, we feel a devotion and a loyalty to our conception of the good which is almost personal.

To try, like our modern professors of philosophy, to subject all concepts to exact analysis and to expose all propositions to unremitting criticism, may be very stimulating to the intellect, but it is starvation diet to a religious nature. We have to look elsewhere for the spiritual food which is necessary to healthy growth. And as Humanists where else should we look but to the great writers who throughout the history of the human race have attempted to come into contact with reality and understand the springs of ethical life?

The doctrine of all the different religious writers of ancient and modern times, of Oriental and Western countries, is so extremely diverse that there is no danger of our having our rationalist views shaken by what they have to teach. But underlying these varied and contradictory and, in many cases, long since discredited beliefs, there is a kind of communicable mood which seems to permeate whatever they have to say. To learn thus from whatever sources happen to appeal to our indiviudal temperaments is not electicism, if by that term is meant building what might be called a mosaic out of small collected pieces. What is absorbed is one identical spirit, or mood, from a number of sources which on the surface appear very different from one another. The kind of contribution which this world heritage of religious and philosophical literature has to make may best be understood by comparing it with the appreciation of art, which is somewhat analogous. To take the case of music, a composer expresses some aspect of experience which is real to him, and real to the instrumentalist who interprets him, and real also to the audience who appreciates his music. But what is expressed has only a conventional relation to the symbols and sounds which make up that part of music which can be studied and spoken of in precise, clear language. It is meaningless to the unmusical listener, however intelligent he may be.

Music and the other forms of art are concerned with objectifying and bringing into partial consciousness the largely unconscious experience of humanity. Religion is primarily concerned with

a similar unknown source of inspiration, but it does not find its expression in art. It sometimes happens that an artist chooses a religious subject, but his art is not judged by religious, but by aesthetic standards. The emotive experience in religion finds its adequate and satisfying expression not in any form of literature or painting, sculpture or music, but in the self-transcendence of the practical ethical life.

Mrs. Flemming also wrote of the passive nature of inspiration. There is the core of religion—to learn how best to utilize the brief hours that are available, in activity which is at once strenuous and passive. To a Christian this is prayer, or "the practice of the presence of God." To everyone it is the contemplative aspect of living. The strength of any religious group depends on the number of its members who are effectually cultivating the inner life of which the outward moral life is merely the spontaneous expression.

W. A. WOOD

Marxism, Past and Present

I sympathise with Mr. Blackham's unwillingness to go over again, in answer to Messrs. Robertson and Murphy, the arguments he covered so exhaustively in your January issue. May I, in his place, point to some of the more obvious fallacies in Mr. Robertson's letter?

In his first paragraph he tries to show that Marxists do not reckon against them all who are not wholly with them. But he brings not a single fact in evidence. He contents himself with quotations from books. This is to revive the age-old Christian practice of supporting lay arguments by quoting holy writ. Mr. Robertson could, no doubt, prove anything to serve his turn by quoting *his* holy writ—to the satisfaction of those to whom his writ is holy. Everyone knows that the Party habitually abuses and condemns those who "deviate" even in a minor degree—if the Party thinks it is an important degree—from the Party line. Naturally, as he says, Communists can also dissimulate to win the support of peasants as adroitly, or more so, as other politicians. But that is neither here nor there.

Mr. Robertson writes that Marx does not burke the epistemological question, but points out that the whole business about our knowledge of the external world arises from a severing of theory from practice. May I answer him as one who also "went through the mill of Greats" and the Idealist school of thought? Most thinkers nowadays would agree that the streams of human action and human belief are closely interwoven. But Marxism is only one

among many human faiths in which thought and action have been synthesised. All the great religions of the world are competitors in the field, as were the doctrines and ways of life of Zeno and Epicurus in the Hellenistic age. One approach by philosophers to the epistemological question lies through a comparative assessment of their conflicting ways of thought and life.

Mr. Robertson claims that Marx and Engels never pretended that their theory was scientifically exact. He cannot, however, deny that Marxism regards its ultimate goals—the classless society, for example, and the "withering away" of the state—as inevitable and scientifically valid results of the Marxist process of dialectic materialism. This was the contention and he has not answered it. In fact, these ultimate goals are the "second coming" of the new Marxist religion. They are now realized by the rulers of Communist lands to be so conveniently remote, that their principal practical use can be as a cloak to cover any policy designed to consolidate state power. "The thing immediately to be done," writes Mr. Robertson, "depends entirely on the given historical conditions in which one has to act?" Exactly. So in effect wrote Macchiavelli. To pretend, however, that action so taken has some special merit because it is in line with Marxist dialect is impudent, untrue, irresponsible, dishonest and mischievous.

STANLEY PRICE

"The Popes and Social Problems"

I thank Mr. M. L. Burnet for his review, in your April issue, of my little book *The Popes and Social Problems*. The object of this letter is not to comment on that interesting and useful review (to do so would be improper), but to ask if you will allow me to make an explanation.

The book was compiled in 1947, and accepted for publication. At that time I was out of the Roman Catholic Church but very tentatively contemplating a possible return. When the printer's proofs came to be revised I had definitely resolved on that step (which I took in March, 1948). I wished to make a few alterations in the book, but printing exigencies made it (through no fault of the publishers) impracticable. I have sent to the British Museum Library, however, a copy of the book with the desired amendments noted in manuscript. They are: (1) At the end of the Preface a very anti-clerical quotation from Professor Clifford is balanced (to preserve strict impartiality) with one from the Catholic Arnold Lunn on the lack of freedom in atheistic Russia; (2) At the beginning of the general text the statement that at the Council of Nicaea

the Pope was represented only by two priests is corrected by saying that the chief ecclesiastic there (Hosius of Cordova) probably represented the Pope; (3) After the section (alluded to in your April issue, p. 3) on "An American Problem," I would have added that though the Roman canon-law and the U.S.A. Constitution conflict in theory on relations of Church and State, yet in practice the Church recognizes non-Catholics as having real *de facto* rights which are sincerely accepted as genuine; (4) At the end of the section on "A Maltese Case" I would have added that the prosecution was (as shown by the precedents cited) by *English* law.

J. W. POYNTER

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